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# The impact of local food initiatives on sustainable diets

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*A case study: 'Goei Eete' in Tilburg, The Netherlands*

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# Colophon

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“We, we people, coming from the same molecules, out of one burly strong star which is burst out. We have developed over billions of years. Life is made by ‘we’. We humanity are so strong that we can save the earth. But we can also destroy it. Even small things do something. We need some luck. Some other spacecraft. Something. Because else what we have now is going to be finished. In space you see that you are the only one. The only planet. There is no spare. And so you have to take care for this one and only planet.”

“Not space is unique (sic.), earth is.”

*Final speech of Prof. Dr. Wubbo Ockels, first Dutch man in space  
28-3-1946 – 18-5-2014.*

## ABSTRACT

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At this point, food has a big burden on environment and health. The food system as it is now is proven to be unsustainable. At the same time, the amount of local food initiatives is emerging. Often these initiatives are evaluated from an economic perspective, but because the initiatives are often based on volunteers, they have a low economic impact. However, little research has been done on the social perspective of such initiatives and the impact on making the food system a bit more sustainable. In this research, via a case study, one local food initiative, '*Goei Eete*' in Tilburg, will be evaluated to determine the impact it might have on sustainable diets. '*Goei Eete*' provides people in Tilburg with the opportunity to order food from local farmers on a website, whereupon the initiative picks up the food and brings it to central pick-up points in the city. Fifteen participants of the initiative were interviewed to identify why they participate, what meaning they bring to it and if they experience any change in knowledge, values and behavior due to participation. At the same time, participation observations were done to get a better understanding of the organizational aspects of the initiative. The results were put in the light of transition theory to get a better theoretical understanding of what is happening. It is complicated to determine if the local food initiative itself is more sustainable than the conventional food system. But all participants report some kind of change after they started participating. Also, all participants talk about the initiative with others, and the initiative shows itself on various places in the city. Taken this all together, the initiative might have an impact on perceptions of people on food and the food system, which creates room for a change towards sustainable diets.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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Peoples' diets have a significant impact on health and environment (Tilman and Clark 2014). The current food system is characterized by intensification. Mass production and technical regimes are important characteristics (Ventura and Milone 2004). The system is technology driven, market oriented and highly productive (Stuiver, Leeuwis, and van der Ploeg 2004). Dutch agriculture is also dominated by modernization, industrialization, productivism and economies of scale (Stuiver and Wiskerke 2004).

Since the intensification of agriculture, the wealthier consumer has more access than ever to plenty of foods. Rising incomes and urbanization have led to the consumption of more processed foods, eating out, snacking and grazing. At the same time, the food industry produces and markets processed and snack foods (Lang, Barling, and Caraher 2009). Global dietary patterns have changed dramatically over the last 50 years, presenting a big threat to health and wellbeing (Johnston, Fanzo, and Cogill 2014). Today, people's consumption patterns have big negative impacts on health and environment. This impacts makes the current consumption pattern one of the great current challenges. On the one hand, despite the intensity and impact of the current agriculture system, still about a billion people suffer from hunger every day. While at the other hand, about two billion people are overweight or obese due to dietary changes and increased sedentary lifestyles, which is associated with numbers of noncommunicable diseases like coronary heart disease, diabetes and several types of cancer (Tilman and Clark 2014). At the same time, agriculture and food production systems are estimated to release more than a quarter of all greenhouse gases (Brown and Jameton 2007).

Where in the past agriculture, national governments and research institutes were at stake in the food system, now non-agricultural parties like seed and animal feed companies, processing companies, industries, banks and supermarkets play the biggest role (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid 2014). Commercial and political stakes are involved, all pointing in different directions (de Bakker & Dagevos, 2011). And in many cases, making a change in the food system leads to undermining people's lifestyles and consumption habits (Beck, 2010).

According to Rhodes (1997) there are three major players in the food system namely the state, the market and civil society. The state could have a role in making policy on creating a more sustainable food system. This is regarded as a complex task since all aspects of the food system must be taken into account to make food policy a success (Lang et al., 2009). The second party, the market could be responsible for a sustainable food system as well. Currently, 'green food' is a small market, rather than a shift towards a more 'green' food supply chain (Lang & Barling, 2013). The market should develop towards a supportive role for the transition in the food system. The third major party is civil society. People can be seen as powerless victims of the current food system, but that is not necessarily true (Miller 2001). Several authors argue that these three players cannot be seen separately, but as interconnected (Lang et al., 2009; Roep & Wiskerke, 2010). Focusing on all three players or on the interconnectedness of the players requires time. Therefore, in this project, the focus will be on this last group, civil society.

At this point, people in the West, as also in the Netherlands are able to eat almost everything nature has to offer (Pollan 2007). Supermarkets offer plenty of foods year round, which people can buy without thinking about how, when and where it was produced. On what do people base their decisions when choosing from the wide variety of foods available? In the first place, the need for food is biological, namely hunger (Germov and Williams 2004). But besides biological drivers, there are also social drivers. Peoples' cultures determine the rules of eating and therefore what foods people buy in

(or out) the supermarket, time, taboos, rituals, recipes, manners and culinary traditions (Neff et al. 2009; Pollan 2007). At the same time, food is also about pleasure and social experiences. Food habits are not universal or natural, but are a social construction (Germov and Williams 2004). They are learnt through cultural determined notions of what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate food, and shape the way people eat like they do. What people consume can be seen as people's diet. The current Western diet has lots of negative side-effects on health, economy and environment. What can be done to decrease these negative side-effects? What should people eat (Pollan 2007)? In general, food intake is regarded as a private matter (Lang et al., 2009), but despite a major amount of public health messages, the world's population is still failing to achieve a healthy balanced diet (WWF-UK 2011). Most consumers in the Western world got used to the availability, taste and low price of food products resulting into fixed habits and food culture (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid 2014).

To find a solution for these problems, the concept of sustainable diets has been introduced. Sustainable diets aim to take into account health and equity, environment and the sustainability of the food system. A sustainable diet has a lower impact on environment, is better for one's health and available for current generations. However, promoting more sustainable diets is not easy. They require re-ordering of the socio-material order. But a current trend does show that people do have an increased interest in food production systems and there is a growing attention to resources (Ventura and Milone 2004). Worries about the current food system are especially existing in urban areas. Initiatives in cities, like urban gardening projects or local food initiatives, develop quickly and aim to promote sustainable diets. They try to empower people towards more food security, raise awareness on environment, lead to community participation and depending on the initiative, reduce stress and increase physical activity (Brown and Jameton 2007). Are these initiatives challenging the 'logic of the vested order' (Roep and Wiskerke 2004) or are they just a result of green fashion? Some effects of these initiatives are known but there is need for more research. Do local food initiatives support a transition towards more sustainable diets?

To answer these questions, one particular local food initiative, '*Goei Eete*' (meaning 'Good Food' or 'Good Eating'), a box scheme initiative that brings local food into the city of Tilburg will be studied. Via interviews and participant observation, this research investigates if local food initiatives can support a transition towards more sustainable diets, which are better for health, planet and economy. By answering this question, a first step will be taken to see if local food initiatives promote more sustainable behavior. If they prove to do so, civil initiatives can be encouraged and supported to enhance sustainable behavior.

The general question in this master thesis is if local food initiatives are able to support a change towards sustainable diets. To answer this question, the thesis starts with a literature review, providing background information about the current food system and its related problems. After the literature review, transition theory will be presented. Transition theory was used to get a better understanding of the possible impact of a local food initiative on sustainable diets, and to put this change in a bigger perspective to make sense of what is going on. Then the research methods are presented, which illustrate what approaches are taken and what choices are made with what reason. It also illustrates the steps of the fieldwork and data analysis. The fieldwork and data analysis have led to four chapters of results, namely results related to personal change, organizational change, practices of the organization which lead to more sustainable diets and lastly if the initiative can contribute to a transition towards more sustainable diets. All four results chapters are concluded and discussed separately at the end of the chapter. The results section is followed by a conclusion, which answers the general research question and the sub questions. Lastly, a discussion of the results with suggestions for further research is provided.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

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### 2.1 THE CURRENT FOOD SYSTEM

Food is important for life. It is vital for health and wellbeing and shapes our physical and cognitive development (Morgan 2010). After World War II, the main goal for the food system was to feed the mass population and to sustain health (Lang, 2009), known as the productionist approach. Since the 1970s, policy on the food system aimed to reduce prices and to increase supply of commodity crops to feed more people in an equitable way. These lower prices resulted in an incentive to use food products as ingredients in processed foods. Processing foods led to food packaging which provided an opportunity for marketing, and to market their resources with relatively high profit margins (Neff et al. 2009). Subsequently, food packaging creates a possibility to transport and preserve food which made the growth of cities and supermarkets possible. In Europe, about 70 to 80% of food is bought in supermarkets (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid 2014).

Increasing welfare causes a rise in the average calorie consumption per person and to a change in composition of food consumed. Urbanization is an important factor leading to dietary change as well. Cities usually have a broader range of food products available, higher education levels and more families where both adults are working (Regmi, Takeshima, Unnevehr, 2008). This had led to an increase of consumption of preserved and packaged convenient foods (Reardon & Timmer, 2007). People do not take into account where the product comes from and are not aware of seasonability of products.

The current food system knows many benefits, mainly for Western urbanized areas (Wiskerke & Viljoen, 2012). For example the continuous availability of food, relatively low prices and the year-round availability of many products. But these benefits come at a cost. These costs have an impact on several areas. Three important areas are family farm incomes, public health and the environment. These impacts will briefly be illustrated in the next paragraphs. The focus in this thesis will be on peoples' health and environment.

#### 2.1.1 Family farm incomes

In the last decades the food system has changed from a demand-based to a supply-based system (Wiskerke & Viljoen, 2012). Simultaneously, a shift in power relations occurred from the primary production sector to the retail sector. Food industries, supermarkets and other food services are competing for the biggest market shares and market power, and at the same time they are trying to meet consumers' preferences (Van Der Meer 2006). Supermarkets try to offer the most attractive assortment at one place. International food trade has grown quickly due to trade liberalization. This had led to heavy competition on the food market. The primary sector has been affected by this competition, conceptualized as the price squeeze (van der Ploeg et al. 2000). The price squeeze refers to the decrease of economic margins because of the high costs of agricultural inputs and the low earnings from selling products because supermarkets demand lower prices and more services (Gibbon 2003). The rise of large-scale farming has led to centralization of farming which made it hard for small farmers to keep up with the competition (Trobe 2001). This has led to unfair trading practices and the supermarket price war which keeps on driving the prices lower and lower. Together with epidemics, tight regulations and high competition has created a tough setting for farmers in the Netherlands.

In The Netherlands, as in other parts of Europe, farmers have successfully increased crop and animal production during the second half of this century (ten Berge et al. 2000). At the same time, the productionist food model has led to a productivist model for farm development (Renting and Van Der

Ploeg 2001). Quantity became more important than quality. Only a few farming systems are suitable for a productivist model. Many traditional farming systems are foreseen to disappear. Progress for some farms can only be realized by the decline or disappearance of others. Farmers have to compete with each other to keep up with the competition. Farmers who decide to stay with their traditional farming system are most often seen as providers of regional quality food. Also a range of new rural development has emerged, like the development of organic farming and agro-tourism to strengthen farmers' businesses.

### 2.1.2 Health impact

The food and agriculture policy to feed the mass population is claimed to be a success. Lots of foods are available at all times. People are able to make their own food choices and are most often not constrained by the non-availability of products. Food comes from all over the world and are transported freshly and safely.

People need food to stay alive. But as soon as welfare rises above a certain level, people start demanding other aspects for food besides 'enough to stay alive' (Gerbens-Leenes, Nonhebel, and Ivens 2002). Features like taste, variety and convenience become important too. Due to the availability of higher quantities of food, the wealthy have become well-fed, or maybe even over-fed (Lang et al., 2009). Also Dutch food preferences have changed over time as well. The traditional Dutch meal, characterized by bread, red meat, potatoes and vegetables has given way to the cosmopolitan pattern, characterized by vegetable oils, fried vegetables, rice, pasta, chicken and fish, and to the refined-foods pattern, characterized by a greater consumption of French fries, high sugar beverages, salty snacks, white bread and candy (Dam et al. 2003).

To guide people to make more informed food choices, nutritional information is added on food packages (Garretson and Burton 2000). Besides nutritional information, sometimes health claims are put on the packages as well, to support people even better in their food choices. These claims can be on the content of a product or on a decreased risk of disease (Van Kleef, Van Trijp, and Luning 2005). For example products which claim to be low in fat, high in fiber, high in vitamins or decrease the risk on diabetes (Garretson and Burton 2000; Van Kleef et al. 2005). Adding these health claims on food packaging is contested. Despite there is an increasingly amount of legal constraints to health claims, food companies still have some degree of freedom (Van Kleef et al. 2005). Putting health claims on foods with an additional health value provide the ability for food producers and marketers to increase sales. People feel like choosing foods with health claims, relate to making better food choices (Van Kleef et al. 2005). This might have some negative side effects. For example if foods with health claims are consumed, no further attention need to be paid to having a healthy and varied diet. Also, if a low-calorie product is consumed, people tend to consume more or more other products (Chandon and Wansink 2007). At the other hand, research has shown that people sometimes believe that claims are attempts by manufacturers to sell more of its product, resulting into skepticism about claims (Garretson and Burton 2000). Health claims make it possibly even harder to make the right, healthy food choices.

Several studies show that less educated and lower income groups consume less healthy diets (Hulshof et al. 2003). A Dutch study showed lower socioeconomic status is associated with the refined-foods diet. In both low and high socioeconomic status groups, the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables is declining (Hulshof et al. 2003). This results in malnourishment and high numbers of obese and overweight people. In the Netherlands, about 6.5 million people are overweight or obese. This is 41 percent of the Dutch population (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek 2012).

Being overweight or obese is associated with non-communicable diseases like cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer (World Health Organization, 2014b), leading to high expenditures on health care. Besides the impact on health, being overweight may lead to a severe impact on social life as well (Puhl and King 2013; Rothblum et al. 1990). Extra weight is being stigmatized, which may lead to bullying and discrimination. This may have an impact on important life domains like employment, health care and schooling. Stigmatization may lead to a decrease in psychological wellbeing, social isolation, may have academic consequences, economic inequalities and a decreased quality of life, while being overweight or obese, and other health problems related to health, are often completely preventable.

### 2.1.3 Environmental impact

Besides the impact on people's health, the food system has an impact on environment. Estimated is that about 30 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions come is due to the world's food system (Garnett 2011). Therefore the current food system has a relevant impact on environment. Sometimes local food is seen as a fast and easy option to make diets more sustainable. But the impact of the food system incorporates more than just food miles and greenhouse gas emissions. The food choices people make lead to other gas emissions which have a significant impact on environment and climate change. The amount of food wasted and the resulting pressure on environment is one of the current concerns as well.

#### 2.1.3.1 *Local food*

To reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the concepts 'local food' and 'food miles' have become tools in policy discourse towards an alternative food system (Coley, Howard, and Winter 2009). Lots of foods are available at all times without taking seasonality of foods into account. Currently a big sector is dedicated to transporting foods. Transport requires for example refrigeration of foods which is a significant source of greenhouse gas emission (Garnett 2011). The distance that food travels from farm gate to consumer has generated interest among several groups, like academics, government, media and the general public (Edwards-Jones et al. 2008). The concerns about environment and the interest in local food has led to a plea for food systems that reduce food miles and therefore the emission from fossil fuels. There are many positive claims about environmental and social benefits of local food. People associate local food with freshness, lowering environmental concerns, taste, safety and purity. At the same time, imported foods from the conventional food system are more likely to be perceived as impure and unsafe (Edwards-Jones et al. 2008).

Local food initiatives, similarly as the initiative of interest in this study, often promote local food. They provide an alternative for the current conventional food system. Local food is assumed to be desirable. But this is not necessarily true. This phenomenon is called 'the local trap' (Morgan 2010). The concept of local food is ambiguous (Edwards-Jones et al. 2008). The question of sustainability in the food system is wider than the emission from fossil fuels (Coley et al. 2009). It includes many more aspects like soil degradation, environmental pollution and degradation, fossil fuel dependency, water stress, a decline in organoleptic quality and diversity, waste, a shortage of agricultural land and climate change (Wiskerke & Viljoen, 2012). The food chain produces greenhouse gas emissions at all stages. From farming with all its inputs, to manufacturing, distribution, refrigeration, storing, retailing, preparation and waste disposal. Agricultural emissions are mainly nitrous oxide from soil and livestock processes and methane from ruminant digestion (Garnett 2011).

Only looking at food miles as criterion for 'good food' is seen as public imagination. Besides, buying local is not necessarily more just, democratic, better for health, more food secure, fresh and of higher quality. Local food systems might even reinforce those values considered to be important for the local system. For example local food leads to fewer greenhouse gas emissions due to transport, but might

need lots more water to make the same product which does not outweigh the fuel savings for transport. Locality might only empower people who are already interested in healthy local food and does not reach people who are unhealthy and not interested. It might therefore lead to more inequality instead of less. And due to lack of materials for quick refrigerating and shipping, local food might even not be fresher and healthier than conventional food (Born and Purcell 2006).

#### *2.1.3.2 Impact of food choices*

It is assumed there is a relationship between increasing affluence in society, more affluent food consumption patterns and higher claims on agricultural land (Gerbens-Leenes et al. 2002). Dutch environmental studies show that in the past decades, increasing incomes have led to a higher use of natural resources like water and energy. Besides, dietary choices affect water and land use, pollution, depletion of water, ecosystems and fisheries, loss of biodiversity, destruction of natural habitats and ecosystems and the depletion of oil stocks and after all, climate change (Lang et al., 2009; Macdiarmid et al., 2012; Wiskerke & Viljoen, 2012).

Worldwide, per person per year about 42 kilos of meat is produced. Livestock produces the dangerous greenhouse gas methane. Overall, livestock production is responsible for about 18 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, livestock production uses big amounts of water. About eight percent of global human water use is used to grow food for livestock. To produce 500 grams of beef, 6,810 liters of water is needed. Besides, land pressure due to meat production is high. (Oxfam International 2012) Animal feed production and transport is a key factor in environmental effects of livestock production (PBL 2011). Feed production requires large amounts of land, water and other inputs.

Almost half of the Dutch household land requirement for food was needed for only six foods: margarine, minced meat, sausages, cheese, fats for frying and coffee (Gerbens-Leenes et al. 2002). Staple foods, like potatoes, vegetables, fruits, bread and flour products accounted for only 12% of the total household land requirement. It is estimated that diets which are high in animal products and processed foods, require three times as much land as vegetarian diets. Changes in food consumption patterns will have large effects on total land requirements for food.

#### *2.1.3.3 Food waste*

A significant amount of food that is produced not consumed but wasted. Approximately one third of the food available for human production is lost (FAO, 2013). In developed countries, food is wasted because of overproduction, losses during processing, withdrawal from the market because of the best before date has passed or household waste (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid 2014). The energy, fertilizer used to grow wasted foods, harvest, storage and transport all have an unnecessary impact on environment (Oxfam International 2012).

#### *2.1.3.4 Climate change and sustainability*

Scientific evidence suggests that people's behavior has an influence on the world's climate. There are multiple scenarios of predicted climate change. But all scenarios contain a rise in global temperature and more variable weather conditions and a higher severity of extreme weather events like cyclones, floods, hailstorms and droughts (Schmidhuber and Tubiello 2007). Despite technological developments, food production remains partly dependent of weather conditions (Parry et al. 1999). This makes yields more unpredictable and increases risks for local food supplies (Schmidhuber and Tubiello 2007). Climate change will also affect other conditions related to food safety and security like altering food production related diseases (Schmidhuber and Tubiello 2007).

The current system has proven to be unsustainable. It is a system characterized by volatile prices that make life hard for small-scale producers and consumers. It is dominated by a small amount of powerful corporations and is contributing significantly to climate change (Oxfam International 2012). It is questionable if there will be enough raw materials and natural resources to sustain this way of food supply. Several studies foresee scarcity of essential (un)renewable materials for agriculture like water, phosphate and fossil fuels (FAO 2006).

We are completely reliant on the earth's ecosystem (Health Council of the Netherlands 2011). To decrease the burden of the food system on the earth and health, people must become aware of these burdens and change their behavior. In the past years a big number of international organizations like scientists, the FAO, World Bank, companies and NGO's like Oxfam and WWF tried to warn the world for the problems related to the current food system. Their reports had different focus points, but the general conclusion is clear: the current food system is not a sustainable one as it is now (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid 2014). Consumers in developed countries affect the commons by what they eat today. It diminishes public goods and threatens environmental health (Lang, 2009). Dutch citizens can help to decrease the impact of the food system by being more aware of these consequences and consume more sustainable diets.

## 2.2 SUSTAINABLE DIETS

Supporters of local food claim a local food system reduces food miles and greenhouse gas emissions, improves food safety and quality, strengthens local economy and enhances social capital (Edwards-Jones et al. 2008). But more aspects must be taken into account when assessing the sustainability of food. Current production methods have, as written before, more substantial negative side effects (ten Berge et al. 2000). The food consumer is not confronted simply with the choice between local-good and global-bad (Coley et al. 2009). A broader framework is required. The world is becoming more and more resource-constrained (Johnston et al. 2014). There is a need to do more with less and in a better way. And the food system must adapt as well.

The concept of sustainable diets is an opportunity for sustainable development to reduce poverty, food and nutrition insecurity, poor health outcomes and the impact on climate change. It covers a wide variety of topics, including the environment, animal welfare and fair trade practices (Verain et al. 2012). The term 'sustainable diet' was already introduced in 1986. It argued that promoting food sustainability and ecological harmony are essential to promote a healthy diet for the individual (Johnston et al. 2014). But support for industrialization and intensification of agriculture continued and food globalization increased. There was little attention for sustainability. In 2010 the FAO came up with a new definition of sustainable diets:

*Those diets with low environmental impacts which contribute to food and nutrition security and to healthy life for present and future generations. Sustainable diets are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable; nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy; while optimizing natural and human resources. (FAO, 2010)*



The concept promotes a more consumer-driven thinking on sustainability of one's diet, involving the sustainability of agriculture and promoting research and policy agenda's that introduce nutrition of one of its core dimensions (Allen et al. 2014). It emphasizes the health and food security purposes of the food system and the need for quality, not just quantity and access. Determinants of the sustainable diet are according to Lairon's framework (Figure 1) namely 1) wellbeing and health, 2) biodiversity, environment and climate, 3) equity and fair trade, 4) ecofriendly, local and seasonal foods, 5) cultural heritage and skills, and 6) food and nutrient needs, food security and accessibility (Lairon, 2012 as in Johnston et al., 2014)

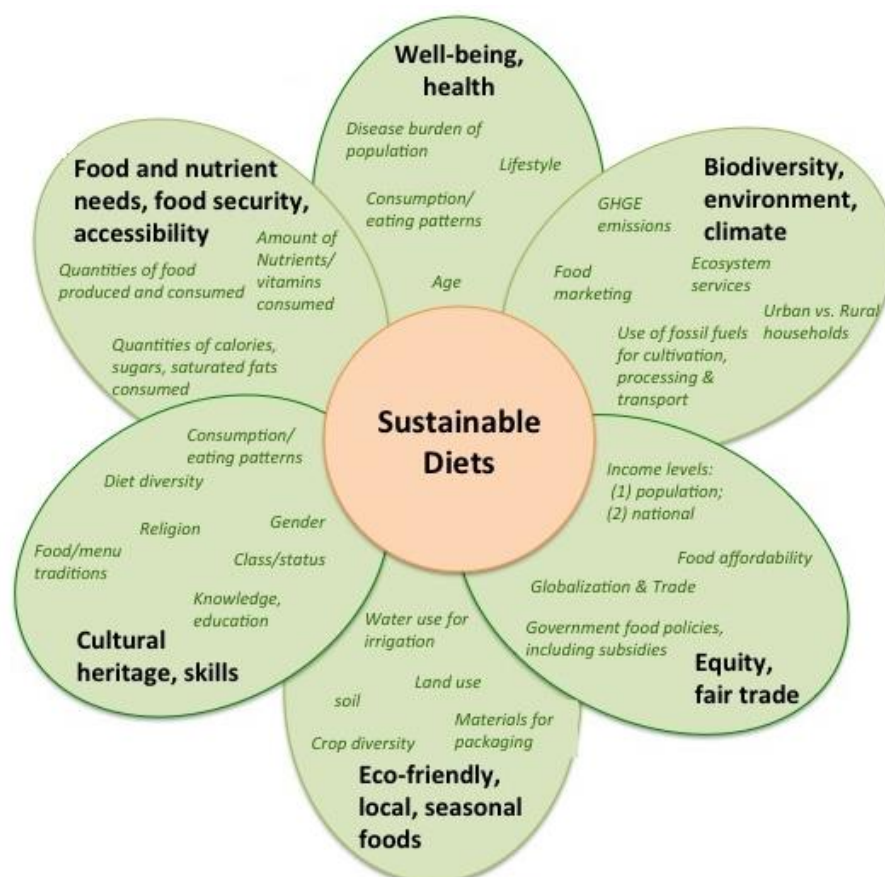


Figure 1: Lairon's framework. The key components, determinants, factors and processes of a sustainable diet. As in Johnston et al. (2014).

In general, sustainable diets promote environmental and economic stability through low-impact and affordable, accessible foods, while supporting public health through adequate nutrition (Johnston et al. 2014). Sustainable diets consider how the food system influences health and environmental outcomes and vice versa. It has positive effects on the determinants mentioned above. It will have a positive impact on public health, it will increase environmental and economic sustainability and will decrease social inequalities. Other possible benefits are improves psychological well-being, animal welfare, cultural and social diversity and knowledge sharing.

### 2.2.1 What is a healthy sustainable diet?

Dietary choices have an effect on environment as well as on health. There are a number of global health challenges related to over- and under consumption of dietary energy and nutrients. Some

attempts have been made to create sustainable eating guidelines. For example Sustain's Guide to Sustainable Food and the WWF's Eat Well Plate. While developing such sustainable eating guidelines, not only environmental factors, but also health factors must be taken into account. Sustainable dietary factors for the future must include a variety of plant and animal foods which promote health and biodiversity. To obtain sufficient amounts of nutrients required for health, people must eat a high variety of foods. Therefore the nutrient quality of foods must be improved. The challenge is to identify food patterns that provide people with all nutrients people need to maintain good health, in appropriate amounts, are equitable, sustainable and affordable. It is still unknown how to take all these aspects into account. Besides, it is likely not only one sustainable healthy diet but a number of dietary patterns which are more sustainable than other patterns (Riley and Buttriss 2011).

The Barilla Foundation for Food and Nutrition (BCFN) came up with a double pyramid model (Figure 2) to illustrate the health and environmental impact of foods (BCFN, 2014). The foundation argues that anyone who decides to eat in a responsible way, reconciles well-being and environment.

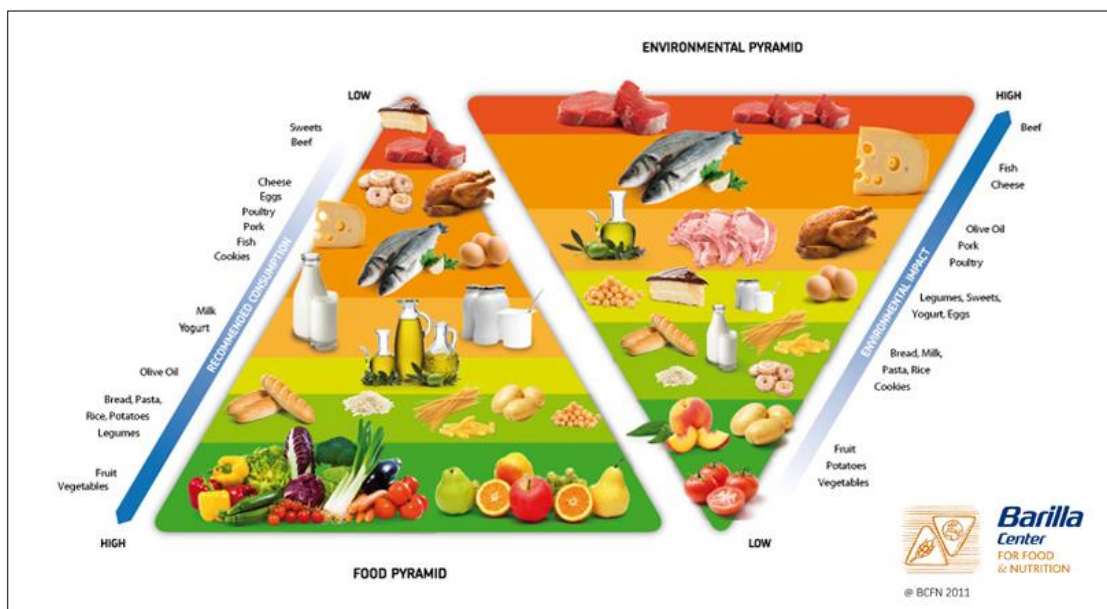


Figure2: Double food pyramid Barilla Center (Barilla Centre for Food and Nutrition 2014)

The pyramid on the left is the food pyramid which shows the products that are recommended to be consumed frequently on the bottom, and the products that should be consumed in moderation at the top. The right pyramid is the environmental pyramid. It illustrates the environmental impact of foods. The foods with low environmental impact are at the bottom, and foods with a high environmental impact on top. This has been determined via life cycle analysis. The main steps of the product's life, from cultivation to raw materials to consumption have been analyzed in terms of greenhouse gas remission for each step, water resources and surface area used. When you compare both pyramids, foods which are good for one's health, have the lowest impact on environment.

In general, to consume more sustainable diets, people should eat more plants, eat less meat, eat less processed food, eat more certified food and waste less food (Eating Better n.d.). Red meat has the largest burden on environment, followed by cheese. The smallest burden is caused by vegetables, potatoes, bread and fruit (Health Council of the Netherlands 2011). Nutritionally, whole foods are better for one's health than their processed and packaged counterparts. Whole foods also bypass high energy costs of food processing so more profit stays at the farmer (Storper 2003).

### 2.2.2 Economic and social factors

Currently there is a growing interest in locally sourced and organically produced food. It is suggested that local and organic foods are a model for sustainable consumption for economic, social and environmental reasons (Seyfang 2006). Organic produce is more in harmony with the environment, protects human health, promotes food safety, animal welfare and taste. The increased attention in local and organic food, comes with an increasing interest in relocalization and shortening of the supply chain. This means food should be consumed as close to the point of origin as possible (Reed 2001). The rationale for consuming more local food is to reduce food miles to cut energy and pollution associated with transporting food (Jones 2001). Local food might improve connections between consumers and producers, which might increase ethical and social capital around food systems and educates people about the source of their food. This all might result into strengthening local economies (Norberg-Hodge, Merrifield, and Gorelick 2000).

## 2.3 CHALLENGES FOR A TRANSITION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DIETS

### 2.3.1 Productionist approach

Sustainability is fundamentally about choices that people make and the associated consequences (Larsen 2009). Currently, the wide variety of choices all people in society make, affect the environment. Related to food, choices in farming, production and distribution determine what ends up for sale in the supermarket or other food outlets. People who buy food have the option to buy or not buy certain foods, assessed on the impact on environment. This requires awareness and knowledge. Even though people might be aware of environmental issues around food and agriculture (Sargant 2014), many people do not behave accordingly. It is believed that due to the productionist paradigm, people have become disconnected from food (Feenstra, 2002; Wiskerke, 2009). This resulted in less knowledge about food, a disconnection from the taste and quality of food and being used to the availability and low price of food (Feenstra 2002). People choose their food based on, for example habit, convenience, ethnicity, tradition, culture and nutritional requirements (Gerbens-Leenes et al. 2002), and food choices are often based on the types of food that the food industry actively markets. Via marketing perceptions, knowledge and behavior may be affected. Marketing leads to social identification and positive associations with brands, but can also create false impressions about appropriateness (Neff et al., 2009).

### 2.3.2 Barriers for change

Consuming more sustainable diets means to reduce the environmental impact per calorie. The Dutch, or Western, consumption pattern with its abundant food supplies and carnivorous nature is a proper option to take environment more into account. But people are so much used to their current diet, that it is hard to make a change. Besides, most people do not have enough cognitive resources available to make the right choice; even if people are willing to make a change, it is hard to understand when one is doing the right thing and when change is sufficient for health and environment (Moisander 2007; Spaargaren et al. 2013). The food system is complex and information about food is often controversial and dubious (Moisander 2007). Besides, people interpret scientific messages differently, not necessarily as how the message was supposed to mean (Hart and Nisbet 2011). And if people interpret messages in the right way, environmental claims and green advertising have caused skeptical views about the environmental benefits of products claimed to be green (Moisander 2007). Science sends out different, colored messages as well and the information available on climate change includes large uncertainties (Shackley et al. 1998). This makes messages on climate change confusing which is possibly an extra barrier to decide on what the most desirable behavior is.

### 2.3.3 Related change

To go back to the past, where people took relatively a lot of time for food and where food was relatively expensive does not seem to be an option. The same connection to food as in the past is impossible since many things have changed from the time when food came from nearby and was not processed and packaged. Society has changed over time as well, and is now used to cheap, available and convenient foods. The high speed of urbanization has led to a new order, where many people live in cities. In the past, most often females were responsible for the household, while men were taking care of the family income. Currently it is more typical that both females and males are taking care of the family income, while females often still take on the household and food work. Therefore there is fewer time available for household activities and it is not realistic to demand from people to think deliberately about all products they are buying. Products come from all over the world now, which shapes the current world economy. Besides, new technologies make it possible protect food security in another way, for example in crop production, crossbreeding, storage and transportation. At this point, people must learn to live within environmental limits (Dillard, Dujon, and King 2009), change their diets accordingly and thus limit environmental harm.

For a long time, economic growth has been the leading paradigm for development in Western societies (Magis and Shinn 2009). This type of growth has led to inequality and excess consumption. The resulted inequality has distorted the allocation of economic resources, excluded most people from democratic participation, undermines institutional legitimacy and creates social instability. To make a change for sustainable development, the development goals must be refocused. When people realize that development does not necessarily means economic growth, but can also be development in a qualitative way, it might be easier to make a change. This requires a paradigm shift, which will probably not come easy.

## 2.4 CIVIC FOOD NETWORKS

As described in the previous section, there are some major challenges to overcome to let society make a change towards sustainable diets. In this thesis the possible effect of a local food initiative will be studied. Some researchers indicate aspects local food initiatives that make it easier to change behavior, so possible also towards more sustainable diets. Via initiatives, people might be able to break through the lock-in of consumer behavior because they get in touch with new social norms, social learning, and habits might be unfreezed (Green et al. 2006). Supportive environments are key in shaping people's choices and behavior (World Health Organization 2014). Initiatives might decrease the gap between cities and nature. And it is easier to care for environment if people see the relationship between food and nature (Green et al. 2006).

There is a lot of literature and terminology about such initiatives, the terminology used in this thesis requires some clarification.

### 2.4.1 Alternative food networks

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of literature on the emergence of new types of producer-consumer cooperation in food networks which run parallel and/or opposite to the dominant, globalized, concentrated trends in the current food system (Renting, Schermer, and Rossi 2012). These new consumer-producer relations have been studied from various different perspectives. Therefore, the perspective taken in this thesis requires some explanation. An example of such a perspective is the perspective of alternative food networks (AFNs). Recently, AFNs have been analyzed from the perspective of sustainable consumption as social movements, or as attempts to articulate alternative economic spaces and transform the structures and organizations of current food systems.

To date, new types of AFNs have developed. Citizens play an active role in initiation and operation of new forms of consumer-producer relations within these types (Renting et al. 2012). Examples of such AFNs are for example groups which mobilize land, financial capital or other resources to support the development of food production activities, get involved in production activities, or buying groups of local and/or organic food. Despite the variety within of initiatives and practices of AFNs, there are some shared characteristics to be identified. The networks embody new forms of engagement with food that go beyond provisioning alone (Renting et al. 2012). Also, the networks are intended to be systems of food provisioning where producers and consumers play active roles in management and there is a direct relationship between producers and consumers (D'Amico 2015). They try to embody an alternative to the global and industrial food system. Unlike the anonymity of products in the big distribution chain, products are rooted in specific territories, production traditions and food cultures. Besides, AFNs strive for socio-economic inclusion who are marginalized by the corporate food system. They also aim to be more environmental friendly than industrial food systems by provisioning more traditional, natural and ecological products, while at the same time they try to reduce food miles.

#### 2.4.2 Civic food networks

All aspects of AFNs resonate with the initiative of study: '*Goei Eete*' (more information about the case in chapter 3). However, studies at AFNs often focus on the producers' side (Renting, Marsden, and Banks 2003). Within this perspective, it is tried to get a better understanding of to what extent, and how certain motivations and interests results in new practices of food provisioning; they take the perspective of how an initiative can take a transformational role in food provisioning systems and how practices can be extended beyond the borders of the initiative (D'Amico 2015). Capturing the roles of consumers in the AFN are often not taken into account. In this study, the focus is on the role of people to change knowledge, values and behavior around food. Therefore, not the conceptualization AFN will be used, but the conceptualization of Civic Food Networks (CFNs). This framework can be used to study the role of the consumers themselves. Consumers constitute an essential part of the AFN (D'Amico 2015). They are becoming increasingly crucial in governance of alternative food systems. '*Goei Eete*' can be seen as an informal group of consumers, where producers and consumers are increasingly interconnected. The people within this group organize food provisioning themselves, and are engaged to promote activities to raise awareness about food and the food system.

Even though there are many barriers for change, people are willing to respond on problems they come across in life. Through CFNs, people can react to what they want to accomplish. When you get the ability to solve the problem, you do not have to wait for other parties to respond. Besides, when solving the problem together, people will feel less lonely in the middle of the mass (Hendriksen 2013). Currently, the amount of CFNs, like urban gardening projects and local food systems, are rising. Can CFNs contribute to a solution regarding the problems of the current food system? People are part of the problem themselves so why could they not contribute to a solution?

#### 2.4.3 Critique on civil society initiatives

The conceptualization of AFNs and CFNs have been critiqued. Three critique points will be described in the upcoming section. Namely the difficulties with democracy and inclusion, the not taking into account of the bigger picture, and the concept of reflexive localism.

##### 2.4.3.1 Democracy and inclusion

Common criticism on civil society initiatives is the limited democratic aspect (Salverda, I., Pleijte, M., van Dam n.d.). When somebody does not agree on the initiative's ideologies or practices, the person just does not participate and the law of the jungle applies. However, this depends on the character of the initiative. Another related criticism is on the representativeness of initiatives. Initiatives often focus on certain interests, values and mutual trust, and decide whom to target and include accordingly (Hinrichs and Allen 2008). Also, initiatives are often transparent for insiders, but not for outsiders. So

it might be hard to drop in later into the initiative (Salverda, Pleijte & van Dam, n.d.). Also the conceptualization of 'class diet' applies. It reflects the fact that people with low incomes cannot afford to buy in the AFN/CFN (Goodman 2004). These aspects might to exclusion of the AFN/CFN.

This research will not focus as much on democracy and inclusion, but on how social practices can lead to more sustainable diets. Nevertheless, this critique will be taken into account in the analysis.

#### **2.4.3.2 Bigger picture**

Another problem with the AFN/CFN approach is that it does not as much take into account other problems related to sustainable diets. Unsustainable consumer behavior flows from social expectations and cultural norms. Sometimes behavior comes from habit, but sometimes people behave in certain ways because it is what everybody else does (Green et al. 2006). Despite lots of public health messages, people still do not consume a balanced healthy diet (WWF-UK 2011). Economic constraints, institutional barriers and access of more sustainable consumption play a role in making a change as well. Civic food initiatives might enhance access to healthy, local food, but this extra access is realized in the current capitalist food system. But in the end, the entire system has to change to provide food sovereignty for everybody. Structural reforms to markets and property regimes must be made, but this does not happen directly via food related civil initiatives (Holt Gimenez & Schattuck, 2011).

Also dietary recommendations are most often 20 years out of date (WWF-UK 2011). Therefore they must be adapted to the new, globalized availability of foods. These recommendations must provide people with a clear overview about what in the wide range of products, is a sustainable product, and what not.

Nevertheless, a CFN possibly has an impact on the dominant food system via peoples' practices. Via the use of transition theory in this thesis, these possible impacts of peoples' practices will be determined, analyzed and defended.

#### **2.4.3.3 Reflexive localism**

Reflexive localism has been introduced to argue that an AFN is not just good because it is a system of local food provisioning (DuPuis and Goodman 2005). The results and outputs of a local food provisioning system are variable and not always good. Such a system must be critically examined in order to determine if their functioning has a positive impact. Being stressed by scholars is the assumed economic advantage of farmers in AFNs. They can get higher prices by selling their foods via an AFN (Goodman 2004). But this can turn into a disadvantage as well. This might happen if labelling schemes undertake certification of productions. The farmers might be forced to join such an (often expensive) labelling scheme and they might end up competing with other, bigger businesses that are able to sell for lower costs than AFN farmers. This may push the AFN farmer to reduce the price, which results into a price squeeze which the AFN have claimed to overcome (Goodman 2004).

In this thesis a civic food network will be explored and examined on its functioning. But again, finding out its functioning is not the main goal of the thesis. Aspects of functioning will be taken into account, but the social practices of people are key.

### 3 SETTING AND CASE

'Goei Eete' is a local food initiative the city of Tilburg. It gives inhabitants of the city the ability to order food in the area of the city. Meat, dairy, fruits, vegetables and grains, available in the area are displayed on a website. People can order the food they like on a website and pick it up later in the week at of the pick-up points spread around the city. 'Goei Eete' started in 2009 on the initiative of one single person, Bas, who is also a key informant in this research. Currently, the initiative has about 70 weekly orders. The aim of the initiative is to grow to 200 weekly orders.



Figure 3: Photos found on the website of the initiative.

#### 3.1 SETTING

The initiative is located in Tilburg, a municipality in the province Noord-Brabant, in the south of The Netherlands. The municipality exists of the city Tilburg and the villages Udenhout and Berkel-Enschot. The population of Tilburg in 2014 was 210,290 and is therefore the sixth city of the Netherlands (Gemeente Tilburg 2014). Approximately three quarters of the population is of Dutch origin. People with a non-Dutch country of origin are mainly from Turkey, Morocco, Indonesia and the Netherlands Antilles.

#### 3.2 THE CASE

The slogan of 'Goei Eete' is "*Lekker lokaal eten voor een (h)eerlijke prijs*", meaning "Good local food for a fair and a good price". The initiative wants to provide people in the city, and some surrounding villages, with the ability to purchase local food directly from the farmer, without having the burden to travel to all these farmers on a free Saturday every week. Direct trade is guaranteed within this process. There is no long supply chain between the farm and peoples' kitchen which demands money. therefore the initiative supports local farmers. Two third of the price participants pay for the food, goes directly to the farmer. Prices are comparable with regular supermarket prices, so this results in a higher percentage of income per product for the farmer when the products are purchased via 'Goei Eete'.

The main value of 'Goei Eete' is transparency. According to them, honesty is key (Goei Eete 2014b). It is important for people to know where their food comes from. So no marketing tricks on content and origin of food products. They believe more upscaling of farms is not the way to go. Farmers often cannot pay for their own living. They earn little for their products because a lot of money is going to distribution centers and supermarkets. The initiative wants to make a change in a positive way (Goei Eete 2014c). Their goal is to approach the food system from a demand perspective. Consumers and producers will be reunited through the initiative to get the producer a better price, the producer can deliver his products to a loyal group of consumers and contact with the market will be recovered.



Consumers' benefits are to know where the food comes from, who it made and how it has been made. There is no use of transporting food all over the world if good food grows that close. Given the nature of the initiative, it can be seen as a civic food network.

### 3.2.1 Process

Participants can order local food on the website of the initiative. There is no subscription required and there are no fixed boxes which need to be ordered. Therefore participants can decide what and how often they want to order themselves. People can order food from Friday until Tuesday evening. From Tuesday till Thursday the web shop is closed so the volunteers and farmers have time to process the orders and pick up the food. In this process, the orders are gathered and divided per farmer. The farmer prepares the order. On Thursday morning, a van with two drivers drives to the farmers to pick up all orders. This round to all farmers is approximately 130 kilometers. Next, all the orders are assembled at one farm, 'De Walhoeve' in the south of the city. At this farm, all foods are divided into personal boxes. The personal boxes are sorted by pick-up point as indicated by the participants. After this, the boxes are distributed to all pick-up points in the city.



Figure 4: Photo's made during the fieldwork



Orders can, depending on the opening hours of the pick-up point, be picked up on Thursday afternoon, Friday or Saturday at one of the pick-up points in the city (Goei Eete 2014a). Figure 4 illustrates some photos of the initiative made during the fieldwork. Namely the transport van, the gathered products at '*de Walhoeve*', personal crates at one of the pick-up points, an extra vending point at one of the pick-up points, the entrance of '*de Walhoeve*' and me trying to convince my mom to participate at '*Goei Eete*' at one of the promotional activities.

## 4 RELATED THEORIES AND CONCEPTS

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To get an understanding of if and how a local food initiative can contribute to a change towards sustainable diets, the findings of this study will be put in the light of transition theory.

### 4.1 TRANSITION THEORY

Transition theory can be used to get a better understanding of transitions in sociotechnical systems. Sociotechnical systems are a cluster of elements, including technology, regulations, user practices and markets, cultural meanings, infrastructures, maintenance networks and supply networks (Geels, Elzen, and Green 2004). Traditional change models see innovation as a diffusion process: for example via innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and eventually laggards (Elzen et al., 2012). But change is more dynamic and complex, and often involves interaction between novel practices and institutional changes that reinforce each other until they reach any form of stabilization. Therefore, the multi-level approach has been introduced (Figure 5). It recognizes the complexity of processes of change. The general idea of this approach is that system innovations are being shaped by three levels, namely technological niches, the socio-technical regime and the socio-technical landscape (Elzen et al., 2012).

In this section, transition theory will be explained. In this thesis the main focus will be on social practices that may lead to a sociotechnical change. A sociotechnical change like a change in the food system is complex and therefore hard to define. To do a theoretical assessment of what the impact of social practices on the conventional food system is, transition theory is used as a theoretical framework in this thesis.

#### 4.1.1 Novelty innovations and niches

A novelty is a modification or break with current routines and develop in the safe place of a niche (van der Ploeg et al. 2004). Novelty exists in different forms. They use new ways of problem definition and looking for solutions and therefore looking for new social objectives. Novelty does not start within an empty world, they operate within regimes (Geels, 2004). Often they attempt to solve local problems. It depends on time, local ecosystems, local cultural repertoires and town-countryside relations. Novelty becomes part of a niche when a network of actors is formed (Elzen, Barbier, et al. 2012). All actors in the niche share certain expectations about the future and are willing to work on further development. Within the niche, a novelty can further develop and can find ground for radical innovations that initially poorly fit the regime (Boelie et al., 2012).

Civic food initiatives to change the food system can, in transition theory, be defined as novelty (de Haan and Rotmans 2011). Novelty is inherent to insecurity and related to certain expectations. But these expectations do not always match the outcome. Novelty seldom remains isolated. A particular change often implies another change and so on (van der Ploeg et al. 2004). Novelty might have particular goals, but if these goals will and can be achieved depends on the local system (Stuiver et al. 2004). In this thesis, '*Goei Eete*' is framed as a novelty.

#### 4.1.2 Sociotechnical regimes

The current dominant food system can be seen as a regime in transition theory. A regime is the constellation that dominates the functioning of the system (de Haan and Rotmans 2011). It indicates a set of rules that guide and constrain actors within a system, like legislation, informal rules, economic factors, financing structures and dominant discourses (Elzen, Barbier, et al. 2012). Regimes evolve over time and are always built on previous regimes (van der Ploeg et al. 2004). In a particular regime, specific knowledge and specific ignorance are present. This has an effect on insights, databases and common

rules. Regarding the food system, the conventional food system is the most powerful constellation at this point of time. Dominant power structures and discourses make it hard to make a change. Therefore, to make a change towards more sustainable diets, it is important that the current regime undergoes a transformation. For example if power structures, values or belief systems change, this creates a possibility for new innovation (Moors, Rip, and Wiskerke 2004). If this occurs, it might open up space for new innovations towards more sustainable diets. The regime of the conventional food system will lose legitimacy and trust in the system will be eroded (van der Ploeg et al. 2004).

At this point, people are starting to gain insight in the problems of the food system and specific knowledge is no longer ignored. This might indicate the current regime of the food system is evolving to a new regime. The initiative '*Goei Eete*' and peoples' practices within the regime might have an impact on discourses, acknowledging certain problems and informal rules.

#### 4.1.3 Sociotechnical landscapes

Change processes within a regime are likely to lead to evolutionary patterns of innovation. The sociotechnical landscape is the wider external environment which takes into account the broader societal relevance and context (Elzen et al., 2012). This external environment is beyond the direct influence of the niche and the regime actors (Geels & Schot, 2007). Within transition theory it is argued that socio-technical landscapes consist of a cluster of elements, including technology, regulation, user practices, markets, cultural meaning, infrastructure, maintenance networks and supply networks (Geels, 2004). The material order of cities, factories, highways and other infrastructural orders are part of the sociotechnical landscape as well. Landscapes provide a strong structuration of activities; material environments, shared cultural beliefs, symbols and values are hard to deviate from (Geels 2004).

Radical novelties might have a 'mis-match' with the existing regime and landscape. The practices and values of '*Goei Eete*' might find little backing within the regime and landscape. This might lead to tensions. Nevertheless, niches are seen as crucial for system innovations, because they provide seeds for change (Geels 2004).

#### 4.1.4 Windows of opportunity

Ongoing changes of discourses, values and opinions can provide windows of opportunities for novelties to develop (Geels, 2004). At present, there are multiple reasons for people to challenge the sociotechnical regime and landscape. Climate change is an important factor to challenge current regimes. Changes in values and ideologies can make climate change a more salient problem and might put pressure on current regimes. Another reason to challenge a regime is internal technical problems within the existing regime. For the food system, these technical problems can be food scandals or the outbreaks of animal diseases like the bird flu and food and mouth disease. Also the price squeeze on farmers might be regarded as a problem. Both climate change and internal problems within the food system might have led to changing consumer preferences, which gives room to new markets like organic foods in the supermarket, but also the emergence of local food initiatives.

The practices of a civic food initiative might lead to changing discourses, values and opinions, which can have an impact on sociotechnical regimes and landscapes. This might create new meanings of food and new perspectives on what the food system should look like and after all make a change in the food system. To get a better understanding of how this process works, transition theory is useful. It provides a framework to put social practices in the perspective of society and societal change.

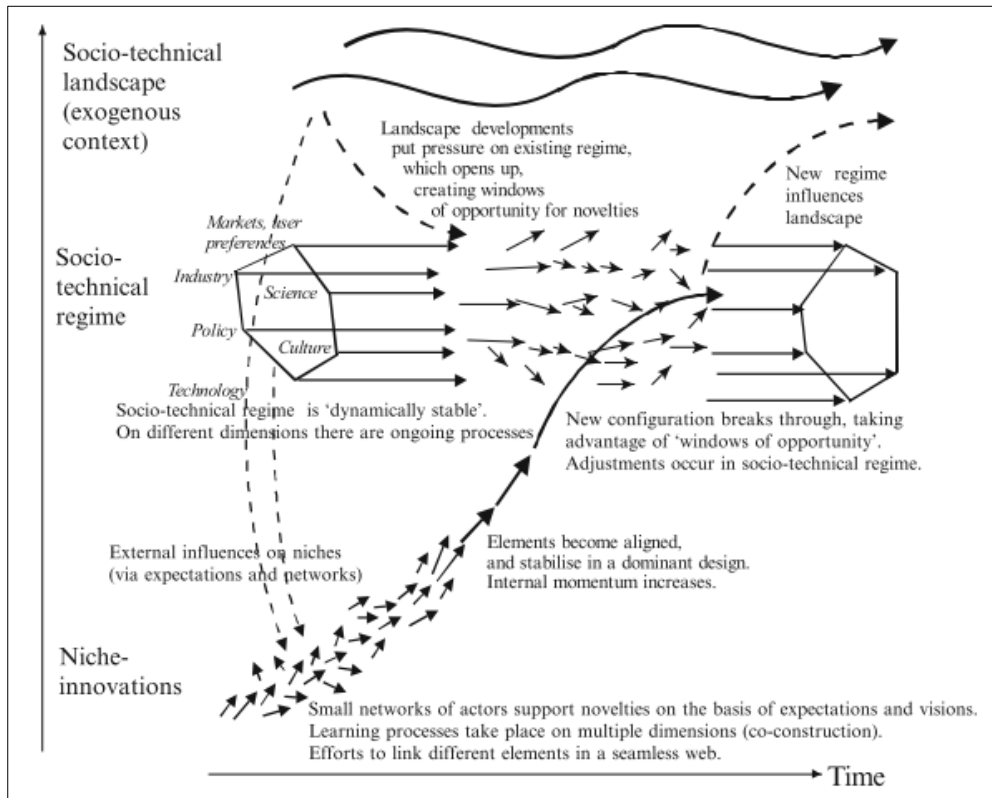


Figure 5: A dynamic multi-level perspective on system innovation. Regime developments are usually relatively stable. Under the influence of landscape and/or niche developments a period of transition may begin. Novelties emerging from niches may then gradually take the upper hand in the regime and lead to a new period of (dynamic) stability (Source: Geels and Schot 2007 : 401, reprinted (Elzen, Barbier, et al. 2012))

#### 4.1.5 The transition

Change emerges from interactions between the three levels, niches, regimes and landscapes (Elzen, van Mierlo, and Leeuwis 2012). The connecting processes between the levels require more attention. How and under what circumstances a niche influences a system is still poorly understood. The relationship is often not linear and straightforward. Practices are rarely simply transferred from the niche into the regime. Some form of change of translation happens to make adaptation possible. How are these new connections built? To understand the process better, the concept ‘anchoring’ is used. According to Elzen et al. (2012:3):

Anchoring is the process in which a novelty becomes newly connected, connected in a new way, or connected more firmly to a niche or a regime. The further the process of anchoring progresses, meaning that more new connections supporting the novelty develop, the larger the chances are that anchoring will eventually develop into durable links. (Elzen et al., 2012:3)

Anchoring does not implicate the permanent uptake of a novelty into a regime. It is a continuous process of probing new connections (Elzen et al., 2012). Besides, it is a process where activities of individuals and individual organizations are crucial to create new connections between novelty and environment. There are three forms of anchoring to be distinguished (Elzen, van Mierlo, et al. 2012). The first form is *technological anchoring*. This happens when technical characteristics of the novelty become defined in the actors involved. The second type is *networking anchoring*. This indicates changes in the network of actors that carry the novelty by for example producing, using, or developing it and thus become related. Network anchoring occurs for example when contact and exchange with

other actors is intensified, when interdependence is increased and the coalition supporting the novelty is strengthened. The last form is *institutional anchoring*. It refers to institutional characteristics of the novelty like the new rules developed in relation to the novelty. It means that developments within a niche are being translated into new rules that play, at least temporarily, a role in activities of niche and regime actors. This type knows several categories. For example how people make sense of themselves and the world around them, including beliefs, visions, problem views to which people orient their behavior and actions and identity. Another category includes normative institutions like the translation of societal values into normative rules and aspirations that can be embedded in laws, regulations, policies and ethical standards. A third category is in economic institutions that govern markets and economic activities. Change might happen in contracts, trust and value chains.

The construction of novelties and niches in the food system and the corresponding increasing eco-awareness are already present. To move from niches to a shift in regimes, novelties must be anchored in all different levels. What actually happens, remains unclear. Transition is unpredictable and never linear. It seems logical that if people do not change values and behavior, transition stops within the niche. People might perceive barriers for change. Often these barriers are attributed to motivational and practical complexity of new behavior (Moisander 2007). Are local food initiatives novelties that are not yet acknowledged or still hidden opportunities to support a transition towards a more sustainable food system? And if they are, are they create room for innovation or change within the vested order?

## 4.2 LIMITATIONS OF USING TRANSITION THEORY

Transition theory mainly focuses on the technical element of sociotechnical change. The challenge is to understand the social element. The social element in sociotechnical change refers to the fact that innovations are shaped by social processes rather than to the way technical systems are implicated as to define and reproduce daily life (Shove and Walker 2010). However, the emphasis is in this thesis on the social aspect of sociotechnical change.

Therefore, using transition theory to get a better understanding of local food initiatives and its impact on change, has some limitations. To begin with, the initiative 'Goei Eete' is in this thesis framed as a novelty, emerging in a niche of other local food systems. Using transition theory suggests that the niche will diffuse to give it more visibility and in the end enter the mainstream market and take over the current regime. But if such a niche, there will be new distribution system with many chains to be able to distribute food. Besides, it is not realistic to argue that all food the Dutch consume must be local. The goal of the initiative is not directly to change the food system. They argue it would be nice if the initiative had an impact, but they are not really trying to have this particular impact. There are several strategies to become a player in transition, but they do not look into this. It is interesting to find out the impact of the initiative without them focusing on actual transition. The question in this thesis is not if the local food initiatives will take over the food system, but if local food systems might have an impact on the dominant food system.

The social aspect of sociotechnical change refers to a change in practical know-how and the routines and expectations people have and how this shapes future innovation are of interest (Shove and Walker 2010). Social practices are at least as important as technical innovations in the discourse around a change towards more sustainable lifestyles. It has been argued that relations between consumers, producers and systems of provision are mediated and co-produced through practices (Spaargaren 2003). In this thesis, only the group of consumers within the civic food initiative are taken into account. However, Spaargaren (2003) also uses 'The Social Practices Approach', to illustrate that consumers are enabled, constrained and contextualized by systems of provision. To theorize social practices are

defined by a diffuse range of methods than by the existence of a clear and systematic analysis (Reckwitz 2002). This thesis might provide some insights in what the enabling, constraining and contextualizing factors for making a change related to food are.

Lastly, using transition theory is being linked to changes over longer periods of time. A change in the food system is an example of a transition process which will not happen in a short period. It will likely take decades before any (visible) changes occur. Using transition theory as a framework to determine if and how local food initiatives support a transition towards sustainable diets is a bit dangerous. It will be hard to determine if a change in the food system, if that change occurs, happened due to local food initiatives. It is not possible to verify what the actual impact was. This might work for retrospective studies, but not for studying the present (Elzen et al., 2012). The framework of transition theory is being used in this thesis to identify the possible impacts, and not to defend the impacts that can be ascertained.

## 5 RESEARCH METHODS

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### 5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Little research has been done on the effect of CFNs on sustainable diets. Therefore the study to be conducted will be explorative. A phenomenon, namely civic food networks, will be studied to interpret the meaning people bring to it. For this reason qualitative methods will be used. Qualitative methods offer the opportunity for participants to describe the situation in their own words on their own conditions. Therefore, rich data can be gathered that might lead to a description of the phenomenon. A social phenomenon will be explored in order to find empirical patterns that might function as the beginning of a theory (Boeije 2010).

Research was conducted via multiple ways of data collection and analysis. Namely, participant observation at the initiative and qualitative interviews with initiators and participants. These ways are covered by a case study approach. This approach was selected to allow a holistic, in-depth understanding of a particular case to provide as much information as possible to answer the research question (Kumar 2014). In a case study the following can be investigated: “the essence of a case study, the central tendency among all types of case study, is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented and with what result” (Yin 2009 p.12). Moreover, in this study temporary events within a specific context were investigated. There was no control over the events possible and the research questions to be answered are ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions so a case study was required (Yin 2009). In the following section, the line of thought and practices on finding the case study is presented.

### 5.2 RESEARCH SAMPLE

#### 5.2.1 Cities

Cities are particularly vulnerable to the contemporary food supply (Halliday & Barling, 2013). Populations are dense, there is a lack of ability to produce sufficient food themselves and do not have the ability to provide themselves with food directly outside the city. Therefore, local food initiatives and/or CFNs are especially developing in urban areas (Halliday & Barling, 2013). For this reason, the context of the city of Tilburg was used in this study.

#### 5.2.2 Tilburg

Tilburg is a city in the Southern part of the Netherlands. The city’s economy used to have an emphasis on the textile industry. But after 1960 the industry got into trouble. Since then, almost all factories shut down. A new diverse industry developed. At the same time, lots of old places are in disrepair, new buildings built after the troubles of the textile industry were supposed to fix the city but are not more than concrete ugly buildings. The city lost its historical character and ambience. Currently, the municipality is trying to increase livability in the city. In addition, in the last years, also in Tilburg, local (food) initiatives and CFNs developed to improve the character of the city and to connect people with each other. Several initiatives in relation to food developed as well, like urban gardening on spare land, urban gardening in the middle of the city center and local food subscriptions. Because initiatives in Tilburg are rather new, people still know their incentives why they started participating, and what implications this had on their lives. Therefore this city was applicable for the research that was conducted.

#### 5.2.2.1 Access

Tilburg was accessible to me as a researcher. As I grew up there, I know the ins and outs of the city which helped me to conduct the research. Besides, I have a network in Tilburg which provided the opportunity to link me to participants of initiatives. Because people knew me or my family, some people were easier to convince to participate in the research. Besides, I speak the same 'language' (Southern accent) as inhabitants of Tilburg do, which that made it easier to communicate and to trust each other. Doing research in a city I am familiar with, had limitations as well. I had certain assumptions about the culture and the people living in the city which resulted into a slightly biased perspective.

#### 5.2.3 Initiative 'Goei Eete'

To select a food initiative for the research, three food related green initiatives in the city were contacted. One was not suitable for research because it was just starting up, one did not respond and the last one 'Goei Eete', did respond positively. After this response, several conversations were planned to see what the possibilities of doing research in the initiative were. The initiative was very interested in the topic of research, and had enough possibilities for data collection. For these reasons, 'Goei Eete' was selected as case for the case study.

##### 5.2.3.1 Key informants

To support me with the research, two people became key informants. One was the initiator of 'Goei Eete', Bas, who helped me with providing an overview and clear picture of the organization. Since he started the initiative, his input was very useful to get insights in the chronological development and structure of the initiative. Bas will be mentioned as 'initiator' in this thesis. The other key informant was Lucie. She helped me with finding respondents and getting me involved in participant observations. The relationship became reciprocal. She helped me with my research, and where possible I helped with volunteering in the initiative.

#### 5.2.4 Respondents

Respondents for the study were selected on the basis of convenience sampling. Together with the initiative, it was decided to interview five volunteers and ten people who only order food on the website and who are not involved in any organizational aspects. The five volunteers were contacted at the New Year's drink to ask if they wanted to participate in the research. The other participants were contacted in two ways. One way was via the biweekly newsletter. In this newsletter I wrote a short introduction about me as a researcher and the research topic, and a call for respondents. The message was put in the newsletter twice, so that people who were in doubt to participate had another chance to respond. A second way to get respondents was via Lucie. She asked around at a pick up point if people were willing to participate to get a higher variety of respondents for the interviews. Table 1 shows an overview of how the respondents got involved in the research.

### 5.3 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

For this research, the approach of qualitative research was chosen. Qualitative research generally starts with the assumption that people have an active role in the construction of their own social reality. Therefore, research methods are required that are able to capture this process of social construction. The research question was studied through flexible methods which enabled contact with the people involved to a certain extent that made it possible to analyze what was going on in the field (Boeije 2010). A case study requires multiple sources of evidence which will lead to rich information (Yin 2009). Therefore multiple research methods were used, namely semi-structured interviews and participant observation.



### 5.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

To allow respondents to express their own views, give words to their experiences and describe the situation (Boeije 2010), as primary source of data, semi-structured interviews were conducted. The language of the interviews was Dutch. There was no strict preconceived list of questions to be answered but a list of key questions and themes to be discussed (an interview guide), were identified in advance of the data collection phase. This allowed respondents to expand on topics they found most interesting, but also led to discussing unexpected interesting topics. Topics did not have to be discussed in the order of the interview guide and not all topics of interest on the list were specifically examined, as some topics could be picked up from the story of the respondent (Bryman 2004).

Before the interviews started, respondents were told that the interviews would be confidential. It was explained that in the report, only fictitious names would be used. Respondents could pick their own fictitious name, otherwise a name was chosen by the researcher. Besides there was some information provided about the structure of the interview. The first part contained more personal questions about for example incentives to participate, and the second part contained questions about the organization. If the respondent was noticeable nervous, it was explained that the respondent would never be forced to answer a certain question. If the respondent was not willing or able to respond, it was allowed to say to not answer the question. Lastly respondents were asked if they agreed on recording the interview. All respondents agreed on recording. All interviews were recorded on a mobile phone. When all topics from the interview guide were discussed, the respondent was asked if he or she had anything to add. The recorder was switched on during this part, since some respondents started elaborating on some interesting topics in this phase.

Interviewing on the topic of environmentally friendly consumption was prone to lead to socially desirable answers. Respondents were likely to, in combination with recall bias, answer questions more optimistic than the real situation. To decrease the biases, this was taken into account while preparing the interview guide. The interview guide can be found in Appendix I (Dutch) and Appendix II (English).

In total, fifteen interviews were conducted. These interviews were conducted at people with different roles within the organization. Namely the initiator (n=1), board members and people who attend board meetings (n=4), volunteers with minor roles (n=2) and participants (n=8). To protect respondents' privacy, fictitious names are used in the report. Table 1 shows an overview of the respondents.

#	Fictitious name	Sex	Place of residence	Role within the initiative	How involved? Via:	Record
1	Lucie	F	Riel	Board member	Board	Yes
2	Caryn	F	Tilburg	Volunteer	Lucie	Yes
3	Hannah	F	Tilburg	'Board member'	Board	Yes
4	Helena	F	Tilburg	Participant	Lucie	Yes
5	Mieke	F	Tilburg	Participant	Newsletter	Yes
6	Miriam	F	Goirle	Volunteer	Newsletter	Yes
7	Aaron	M	Tilburg	Board member	Board	Yes
8	Aafke (&Robbert)	F (&M)	Gilze	Participant	Newsletter	Yes
9	Yvonne	F	Tilburg	Participant	Lucie	Yes
10	Huub	M	Tilburg	Board member	Board	Yes
11	Elizabeth	F	Tilburg	Participant	Newsletter	Yes
12	Jolanda	F	Tilburg	Participant	Newsletter	Yes
13	Karlijn	F	Tilburg	Participant	Lucie	Yes
14	Linde	F	Tilburg	Participant	Newsletter	Yes
15	Bas/Initiator	M	Berkel-Enschoot	Initiator	Board	Yes

Table 1: Overview of respondents.

#### 5.3.1.1 Organization

To answer research question one, three and five, four semi-structured interviews were conducted with board members and two with active volunteers. Additionally, at the beginning of the data collection phase, the initiator was interviewed to get a better understanding on what their goal or vision of the initiative is and how they do intend to make a change. At the end, end the initiator was interviewed again to answer remaining questions. The goals and visions could then be checked to see if they corresponded with people's incentives to participate. The initiator, board members and active volunteers were asked questions such as why they started (volunteering at) the initiative, how they get their participants how many people participate at the moment, and if they feel like they reach their goals or if they are able to spread their vision. Data was collected to show the implications of the initiative on institutional and network anchoring.

#### 5.3.1.2 Participants

To answer research question two and three, fourteen semi-structured interviews were conducted at participants of the initiative. All respondents for this study were asked the same personal questions, so the input in the interviews of board members and active volunteers was used to get a better understanding of the initiative as well as of their personal stories and opinions to participate. The respondents who only participate at 'Goei Eete', were only asked about personal aspects of participation and opinions about the initiative.

The location of the interviews was determined together with the respondent. In the first place it was suggested to do the interview at the respondent's home, but only if the respondent felt comfortable with a house visit. If respondents did not feel comfortable with an interview at home, the suggested location was a rather quiet place where the respondent felt comfortable. During the interview, all respondents were asked to provide some demographic information like sex, age, household composition and education. Besides demographic information, the respondents were asked questions like how did they get acquainted with the initiative, why they decided to participate and if participation caused any changes in thoughts about environment, lifestyle and eating behavior. The interviews were used to find out if participating has an impact on institutional anchoring.

### 5.3.2 Participant observation

Another research method used for data collection was participant observation. This method was used to help answer all research questions. To get a better scientific understanding of what is going on, it was useful to see the initiative in the real, daily situation. Via participant observation, I as a researcher got acquainted with insider perspectives and organizational life. Participant observation was also useful to build a network of trust, so that people later on would possibly more willing to share information (Boeije 2010). Interviewing alone might have led to more social desirable answers. Gaining trust in me as an interviewer and researcher more, might have led to more honest information. Besides, it was be easier to pick up social desirable answers when you have participated in the actual initiative. In addition, the use of multiple methods enriched the information collected (Kumar 2014).

'Goei Eete' provided me full access to the organization. Therefore voluntary work was done at all stages of the process like ordering food on the website, visiting farmers to pick up the food, helping with food distribution, attending staff meetings and helping at promotion activities (Table 2). During the observations, when possible jottings in Dutch were noted in a small notebook. Detailed notes of observation were written up in Dutch after the observation to allow for coding.

<b>08-1-2015</b>	Volunteer at distribution (pack collected foods in personal crates)
<b>10-1-2015</b>	Attend New Year's Drink (with volunteers)
<b>13-1-2015</b>	Attend board meeting
<b>15-1-2015</b>	Volunteer at picking up food at the farmers
<b>16-1-2015</b>	Volunteer at pick up point
<b>29-1-2015</b>	Volunteer at brainstorm session (Route 200)
<b>31-1-2015</b>	Volunteer at a Food Cooperation Exchange Day
<b>03-2-2015</b>	Attend board meeting
<b>06-2-2015</b>	Volunteer at pick up point
<b>27-2-2015</b>	Volunteer at pick up point
<b>01-3-2015</b>	Volunteer at promoting 'Goei Eete' at the Swan Market, fair in Tilburg

Table 2: Moments of participant observation

To uphold academic ethics, people attending the meetings were I did participant observations, needed to be aware that I was there as a researcher so the people were an object of study. During the observations at the New Year's drink, board meetings, brainstorm session and the Food Cooperation Exchange Day, people were told that I was a researcher and tried to get a better understanding of the initiative. While volunteering at the pick-up point and promoting activity, this was difficult. Many people passed by, so most of the people probably did not realize I was there as a researcher. And who people knew I was there a researcher, often did not perceive me as such but rather as a participant in the organization.

### 5.3.3 Reduce observer bias

Preconceptions about the topic influenced how data was gathered, interpreted and analyzed. To allow for a more in depth data analysis, bracketing was used. To be open-minded in interviews with participants and data analysis, pre-existing thoughts and beliefs will be written down before the data collection phase. This might help to acknowledge and address beliefs and biases as the study proceeds (Tufford and Newman 2010). To stay objective during the fieldwork, I tried to filter out information that was not useful for research, to decrease the forming of a personal opinion about the initiative and its practices.

## 5.4 DATA ANALYSIS

To begin the process of data analysis, all interviews were transcribed. Sometimes sections of interviews were skipped for transcribing, because some data was not as relevant as I had hoped. This resulted into a document of field notes and fifteen documents of transcribed interviews. All interviews were read thoroughly to distinguish aspects which relate to a transition towards sustainable diets. This led to a five-page-list of topics which were possibly useful for analysis. While making the list, the list was subdivided into the most prominent issues at first glance. After the first time of reading all interviews and finishing the list of topics, literature about transition theory and anchoring was read to determine which main topics could be used for further analysis.

This resulted in the topics 'organizational', 'personal' and 'societal'. After making this subdivision, all interviews were read again. Three documents were made, one per topic. All quotes that related to one of the topics were copied in the corresponding document. This resulted into three large documents with quotes of respondents. These documents were read and all quotes were subdivided into subthemes. The overview of subthemes led to four chapters of results. Namely organizational aspects of the initiative, personal aspects of respondents in the initiative, how the initiative addresses sustainable diets and how the initiative could possibly contribute to a transition towards more sustainable diets. The quotes in the subthemes were used as base for the structure of the chapters. Peoples' quotes were used to write the actual results. Since the quotes were grouped into small subthemes, they provided an overview of what was said by whom per subtheme. Quotes were used to support the results. It was aimed to use at least one quote per person in the report. The final results section was supported by 50 quotes, where at least two quotes were used per respondent. The respondents who were involved in the organization got more quotes, since their quotes were used in both the personal and organizational results section.

## 5.5 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

This combination of methods had some limitations. In the first place, in this research only the organizational aspects and participants of the initiative were taken into account. However, due to time restraints, the farmers who participate in '*Goei Eete*' were not interviewed. The farmers are a very important group for the initiative. One of the goals of the initiative is even to support local farmers. If this goal is accomplished or not and how farmers perceive the initiative itself and the participation in the initiative, was not taken into account.

Another limitation is that given the nature of the case, a relatively small case in Tilburg, and the few board members and volunteers involved, anonymity could not be guaranteed for everybody. Especially for the key players who are working in the initiative, anonymity might be broken. It was aimed to keep the results as anonymous as possible. The ones who might not be anonymous communicated that being not fully anonymous is acceptable for them.

Also, because of the sampling methods used, it was not possible to reach everybody. Not everybody will be willing or able to respond with his or her own reasons. This will lead to a respondent bias. Besides, only one initiative will be studied. This will lead to rich data on this particular initiative but the results cannot be generalized to other initiatives in the Netherlands or in the world. Despite this, the methods provide the opportunity to get an in-depth understanding of one single case, which gives a better understanding of what happens within a local food initiative. This might provide new insights for doing more research to get a better understanding of local food initiatives in general.

Within this research there was strived for reliability and rigor. It is hard to determine whether or not this worked out well. Even though the interview guide was used to as a guide for the interview

questions, the actual interview resulted from mutual interests and knowledge of the researcher and respondent. For me, as a researcher, it was easier to ask particular questions about topics I was familiar with. Another researcher might have more background knowledge about other topics which leads to other in depth data from the conversation than I had. Stability reliability is likely to be low. Respondents indicate their thoughts and behavior are shaped by the initiative, friends, family and media. If the study would be repeated in several months, respondents are likely to have developed themselves and provide the researcher with other answers than they did now.

The research question in this thesis is '*How can local food initiatives support a transition towards sustainable diets*'. Some of the data collected from the interviews are gathered in a retrospective form. People might not be able to fully remember when and why they started participating at the initiative. One set of questions in the interview tries to get an insight in personal development after starting with participation. It is hard for people to recall what kind of changes they have experienced and if these changes are due to participation or due to other events. Therefore validity in this part of the research might be lower than desirable. However, personal changes are hard to identify. But general changes of the group can be identified, by grouping and comparing the results, trends that might contribute to a transition can be recognized.

## 6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND PURPOSES

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### 6.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The background information, theories and methods presented above resulted into the following general research question:

*How can local food initiatives support a transition towards sustainable diets?*

The main research question will be answered using sub questions. The first question is asked to find out the general objectives of the initiative. The second and third question are asked to find out if and how the initiative is being anchored in people's lives and if it has an impact the landscape, the (social) rules and regulations. The fourth and fifth question are asked to check if and how the organization itself anchors into the niche and if it has any implications on changing the current regime and rules and regulations.

1. *How do the initiatives' practices support sustainable healthy diets?*
2. *What are people's incentives to participate?*
3. *How do people achieve more sustainable diets because of participation in the initiative?*
4. *What are the opportunities of the initiative 'Goei Eete' for supporting a transition towards sustainable diets?*
5. *What are the barriers of the initiative 'Goei Eete' for supporting a transition towards sustainable diets?*

### 6.2 RESEARCH PURPOSE

The aim of this research is to find out if civic food networks are able to support a transition towards more sustainable diets. This project will contribute to research on the impact of CFNs on people's lives and the impact of the initiative on sustainable diets. So far it has been hard to target consumers to behave more environmental and health friendly (WWF-UK 2011). Currently, pro-environmental behavior is often seen as romantic (DeLind 2010) or as expressing status and development of reputation (Griskevicius, Tybur, and Van den Bergh 2010). This might be true but besides expressing status or romanticism, the initiative might lead to pro-environmental effects. Like an actual change of intention towards the well-being of the planet, health and environment. But local food initiatives might face struggles and barriers in running the initiative and/or targeting the problems related to the food system. People's changes in knowledge, values and behavior due to participation at a local food initiative have not been studied much yet. The question is if the struggles and barriers weigh up against the positive changes people make. If the 'Goei Eete' has, 'below the line' a positive impact on pro-environmental behavior, other initiatives might have the same impact.

Understanding the impact of the CFNs better, could be useful to determine the potential implications of food related civil society initiatives. It will help determine if green initiatives should be supported by for example governments to promote more healthy sustainable diets. Or if green initiatives are just a nice hobby to keep people busy but has no implications on pro-environmental and health behavior at all.

## 7 RESULTS: THE ORGANIZATION

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This section discusses the findings related to the organizational aspects of the initiative. First, a chronological development of the initiative will be exemplified. After the development, the strengths and barriers of the organization in the light of sustainable diets and transition towards sustainable diets will be described. The strengths and barriers can be subdivided in three categories, namely organizational, practical and idealistic barriers. The analysis from observations and conversations I had with the starter, volunteers and participants. Lastly, the findings will be discussed in the conclusion and discussion.

### 7.1 CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

The startup of the initiative was a reaction on the problems of the current sociotechnical regime. In 2009, the starter of the initiative noticed that many farmers were struggling. The biggest part of the margin on their products was, and is lost in the supply chain. Another concern for the starter is the distance between consumers and producers. Consumers are not aware of what is happening at farms and in the 'black box' of the supply chain. Therefore consumers base their food choices on convenience, and not on the effect of their choices. He sees this problem as a worldwide problem, but he has been thinking about how to address this problem in an easy way, from your own home. From this starting point, the idea of a different kind of local food system developed. The idea of the initiator and key actor in the initiative, has its origin in, and resonates with Transition Town ideas to redesign society in a different, local and resilient way. To make a first step in starting the organization, conversations were held with social organizations and farmers. They discussed the values of the new system and made a start in developing.

A couple of farmers were in the working group from the start. The network of the farmers was used to find a bigger group of farmers willing to participate. Conversations with the new farmers were held to see if they were interested in participating. Most often the reactions of farmers were enthusiastic. They were interested in decreasing the distance between producers and consumers. But their idea of Transition Towns to redesign society did not resonate as much. After all, these conversations resulted into a variety of farmers and products who are willing to participate in the initiative. After thinking about the concept and conversations with farmers, the initiative started to have conversations with people. People from the city were asked if they had an interest in a different kind of food supply. This was done at for example local markets or events, where conversations with people were started to check if the ideas resonated with the public. When about 150 people indicated they had an interest, the initiative decided to make a start with supplying food directly from the farmers. At this point, an important link in the distribution, the *Walhoeve*, came up. The *Walhoeve* holds beef cattle and dairy goats. They are located in the south of Tilburg and have space available to distribute all food products into personal crates. The farmer of the *Walhoeve* has a farm shop with its own products and products from farms in the area. These products are also for sale for the participants of '*Goei Eete*'. Besides, the farmer has a particular interest in linking city and countryside.

Practical barriers needed to be overcome to start the initiative. In the initial phase, the initiative tried to overcome these barriers by finding external parties. One practical barrier was marketing. The question was how to communicate the idea of an alternative food system. A challenge here was to communicate the values: the organization does not focus on making profit but on connecting farmers and people. The initiative found a graphic design company which was willing to help out for free. This company designed the website, logo and other promotion materials. Another practical barrier were the food safety criteria (HACCP). Within the network of the initiative there was a sufficient amount of

knowledge available to meet all criteria. And since the initiative does not focus on making profit, the distribution system is run by volunteers. These volunteers were found via word of mouth. Everybody can apply to be a volunteer to contribute to the system with their own skills and knowledge.

After overcoming the first practical barriers and a lot of talking about the contents of the project, the initiative started. Later on more people joined the board, officially registered or unofficially via joining board meetings. From this point the board members started to work on the experience and perception of participating at '*Goei Eete*', communication in the city and connecting new people to the initiative. The initiative became more active in participating in local (food) events and started working on brand awareness. In this period, the weekly orders increased from 30 to 70. The board as it is now is very diverse. People come from very different backgrounds but all have one factor in common, their interest in food.

During the fieldwork for this thesis, the initiative organized a brainstorm session, called 'Route 200'. This session was organized because it is very time consuming to run an initiative like this on a voluntary basis. Most volunteers have (fulltime) jobs and volunteer for the initiative in their free time. The new goal of '*Goei Eete*' is to realize 200 weekly orders, so the margins of the orders allow for a paid employee. This increases the guarantee of continuity of the system, and therefore increases the impact of the initiative. As, so to say, a thousand people would stand up and buy their food locally, the farmer will get financial room to do his own thing than with all supermarket regulations.

A group of 20 active, involved participants were invited to discuss the 'route' towards 200 weekly orders. In this session the meaning of '*Goei*' (good) was discussed. After this discussion, everybody got post it's to write down all thoughts about the route to 200 orders. The post it's were grouped per theme and discussed. All thoughts were united into one document and the workgroup with four interested volunteers 'Route 200' was formed. The idea of the brainstorm session is to allow bottom up thoughts about the development of the initiative and to get people enthusiastic to participate. To expand exposure and reach, the initiative is working on creating synergies with other companies or initiatives in the city. First of all with local restaurants. The restaurants buy food at '*Goei Eete*' with a reduced margin. In return, the restaurants promote the initiative. Also there is a synergy with '*Lekker Brabant*', a platform to connect people from the province Noord-Brabant, for people who love food, cooking and enjoying life. '*Goei Eete*' and '*Lekker Brabant*' support each other by generating digital traffic to each other's website.

'*Goei Eete*' also cooperates with Tilburg University. They have promoted the initiative on the university by handing out local snacks at the campus. The university came up with a tailor-made promotion strategy (Figure 6), as a part of its corporate social responsibility program. They implemented the slogan 'Think global, eat local' to persuade students to participate.

Furthermore, '*Goei Eete*' works with one of the biggest volunteer agencies in Tilburg. When there is a need of volunteers in the distribution process of the initiative, a job description can be put in the database of the agency and people who are interested in the job can react on it. This provides people with an interest in food and



Figure 6: Marketing slogan '*Goei Eete*' at Tilburg University



voluntary work with the opportunity to link to 'Goei Eete'. Also people who otherwise would not have been reached by the initiative.

Besides the existing synergies, the initiative keeps its eyes open for new synergies. There are a lot of small companies and initiatives with mutual values that are potential partners. Having many different synergies strengthens the position in the city by increasing the amount of interdependencies. The disadvantage of synergies though is that they take time and effort to sustain.

## 7.2 STRENGTHS AND BARRIERS

Analysis of the organizational aspects of the initiative has led to the identification of key strengths and barriers, specifically on organizational, practical and idealistic aspects. These aspects, together with its strengths and barriers are illustrated below.

### 7.2.1 Organizational aspects

#### 7.2.1.1 Knowledge and energy

The development of the organization so far illustrates there is enough know-how and energy available within the organization. The organization is entirely based on volunteers. All volunteers come from different backgrounds but have one common factor, which is their interest in food and making a change. Since the group exists of volunteers only, everybody who participates has a personal drive to make 'Goei Eete' a success. The volunteers have a lot of ideas and energy to do their bit for the initiative. A reaction of one of the respondents:

*(7) "Doing something from your own perspective is of course a good thing. Everybody brings his or her own know how and experience into the organization."... "The organization especially exists of people who do what they can. There is a lot of knowledge about organizational structures. Everybody tries to do things as good as he or she can."*

This leads to a group of people with a high variety of views on the food system, goals, idealism and ideas. Their engagements often go further than making the system of food supply work. They for example would like to make people aware of food, food production and its impact on environment, contribute to change, support local farmers and have a different way to buy food than the food from the supermarket. Within the group of volunteers, there is a shared idea that the supermarket system as it is now is unequally distributed and in need for change.

Often new volunteers apply. But it also happens that volunteers leave the initiative. Sometimes because of the expectations of the volunteer does not resonate with the practices of the initiative. For example because of the speed of growth of the initiative, or a difference in values. The starter sees the initiative as a creative project. So there must be room for development and movement within the organization.

At the same time, there is a board meeting every three weeks. This meeting is attended by a group of six to seven people. All people have different specialties within the organization, like responsibility for the distribution, volunteers, spreading the word in the Western part of Tilburg, communication and contact with volunteers and external parties. Therefore a lot of organizational aspects are covered. However, this working system has some drawbacks for the volunteers as well. Some people are fine with focusing on their specialty, but others feel like there is a need of discussion about the organization. For example on how to structure the organizational structure better and more efficient, how to communicate the ideals of the initiative and if the ideals match with the practices.

*(1) "There is no structure in the organization so that is something to work on. And I think the board should focus more on policy than on production or daily practice. That is something that needs to change."*

Another respondent commented:

*(3) "There are several governance structures. The current structure is very much focused on 'working', they are on top of everything. But at some point they must realize the board should take more distance."*

There are plenty of practical aspects to be discussed within a couple of hours. Therefore there is little room for discussion about the more idealistic aspects of the organization. During the meetings, some people have the idea that there has been given enough thought to idealistic aspects and the initiative made a good start, and now it is time to find ways to get new participants at the initiative. One volunteer commented:

*(3) "I wanted to talk. But the reaction was "we have been talking so much..! And we just started." Which I think is fine, but we must keep on talking. You can just make a start. But you must come to a mutual agreement on what you want to accomplish."*

#### **7.2.1.2 Vision**

Some respondents suggest that the enlarging range of organic products in supermarkets, the raise of many other food initiatives and the increase of information available about food in all media, indicate that the interest in food is increasing. Respondents assume that people become more and more interested in where their food comes from and whether or not it is good for your body. These suggestions relate to a trend in food as mentioned in the literature review. Therefore an initiative as 'Goei Eete' might stand a good chance to get a lot of participants involved.

To get more people engaged in the initiative, there is a main focus on reducing barriers to participate. For example opening new pickup points or providing discounts for the first order. For some people taking away such barriers is enough to be triggered to participate. But it might not be sufficient to convince as much people as wanted to buy local food from the initiative. Some people might need incentives to start participating and thus change their current habits of doing groceries. So to expand, the initiative probably needs to focus more on addressing people on motivation to participate. One of the respondents puts it like this:

*(7) "I think you should make it easier to participate. Or more important. One of the two. Easier by more pick-up points in the neighborhood. Or different communication. Try to find different ways of communicating. Making it more important: maybe via a theme from the world news. For example Russia who boycotts Europe and therefore it is important to support the local farmers. That might trigger people. But maybe we have to convince people. Than we have a major role. We must send a certain message. But that requires a lot of thought."*

Thinking about how to trigger people to participate, requires careful deliberation. But at this point there is little time and space to do so. Because of this, some volunteers feel like their voices are not heard, so for some volunteers, volunteering does not feel like a creative project, but as an environment with little room for discussion about what they perceive as important.

Since the idealistic aspect of the initiative often remains unexamined, besides doing a bit to make the food system a bit fairer, there is no consensus yet on a vision on how to accomplish growth. The challenge now is to find a structure that works for a significant amount of the volunteers that leaves

room for discussion of the idealistic aspects and to use people's energy and creativity. But since the initiative is only based on volunteers it is hard to plan meetings. Therefore it is hard to work on such a structure.

## 7.2.2 Practical aspects

### 7.2.2.1 Logistics and continuity

Since the initiative started, it grew from zero to a steady basis of 70 weekly orders. All logistics are organized and properly working. Now, the initiative aims to grow from 70 to 200 weekly orders. But the current distribution system does not allow much growth. The van is not able to transport 200 orders at once, and the central distribution point is too small to divide more products into personal crates. And at the same time, continuity must be guaranteed. There needs to be a margin in the distribution so if something goes wrong, participants can still pick up their food. Quality of the products must be sustained and customer services should stay as it is. There is no standard solution that can be used for this, a solution must fit with the farmers, city and initiative. As one participant said:

*(7) "The system needs to be simplified. It makes it easier for everybody to understand. Also for the organization itself. So you can explain in three steps: this is what we do."*

So growth can be realized to a certain amount of orders only. If the initiative wants to grow more, the distribution system must be adapted to handle more weekly orders.

### 7.2.2.2 Brand and brand awareness

The image of the initiative is often described by most respondents as very positive. The website is open, fresh and accessible. Figure 7 shows the home screen of the website to show what the website looks like. Other key words respondents mentioned were healthy, responsible, honest, fair and friendly. Some respondents said the initiative does not have such a 'geitenwollensokken image' or 'hippie image' as other initiatives, and is therefore more open for everyone. They believe that this is a strength of 'Goei Eete'. It also resonates with the general idea of the initiative to be open for everybody.



Figure 7: Home screen website 'Goei Eete'

The initiative is working on finding a way to manoeuvre in the current system. As a non-profit, volunteer-based organization, this can be regarded as a practical barrier. The most important question is how to promote the organization and how to trigger people to get involved. People are used to buy their groceries in the supermarket, and probably not used to think too much about it. Therefore a strong strategy is essential to convince people who are not involved in thinking about food. A related challenge is to execute the strategy on a tight budget. It is hard to oversee how popular the initiative already is. In one of the board meetings, somebody mentioned “everybody is aware that ‘Goei Eete’ exists”. But the next day another respondent said “nobody knows the organization exists!” It is also complicated to express the image of the organization. As one interviewee put it:

*(10) If you look at ‘Goei Eete’, the first contact was via a flyer. With two colors. Green and blue. I couldn’t get a clear image. But when I looked at the website, it looked interesting. But the issue is not important yet. But people who order at ‘Goei Eete’ see the products and the people at the pick-up point. Those people have a completely different view.*

When asked in the interviews how the participants got familiar with the initiative, most respondents reported that they had heard of the initiative via friends or family. Also some people mentioned they had read about it in the local newspaper. Most often this contact with the initiative was by accident. When the respondents started looking for information, they really liked the opportunity of buying food in a different way. A comment on this of one of the respondents:

*(8) If I would see the poster and if I had an interest in food, I might have a look. But otherwise, how do I know about the organization? I just heard about it by accident. Or actually, saw it by accident.*

A barrier here is to get the message through. People get a lot of input of messages during the day. It is challenging to make get people interested in the message without stalking them or bothering them too much. At the same time other local shops and initiatives need to be taken into account. It seems to be controversial to promote ‘Goei Eete’ for example at organic supermarkets or local bakeries or butchers.

A tension arises here, at this point the initiative wishes to grow from 70 to 200 weekly orders. At the same time, they are struggling with getting effective communication strategies. But if the communication strategies would be effective or even too effective, they would not have the capacity to process all the orders. There is no general consensus on what to do first, work on communications or work on getting the logistics ready for a bigger amount of participants and therefore orders.

### **7.2.2.3 People**

Most of the respondents are enthusiastic and committed to participate at the initiative. They indicate they do not foresee to stop ordering food at the initiative if it remains this easy to order. Most respondents talk about the initiative with others. They explain to others what the initiative is, why they like to order food at the initiative and why others should do the same thing, ordering groceries at the initiative.

Nevertheless, the initiative is relying on people’s choice. People have the free choice to participate and buy a certain amount of their groceries at ‘Goei Eete’, or buy all their groceries at the supermarket or other food outlets. In general, people like the idea of the initiative. But when these people actually get the choice to participate, it seems to be hard to move away from habits. For example in promotion activities, people say they appreciate the initiative and its practices, but when they get the choice to actually participate, they are often found to be unreliable. One of the board members said:

*(15) We have been walking around with snacks around there. We have tried so many things. It makes sense that in the beginning a lot of people ordered food. But it decreased rapidly.*

And:

*(15) Before we started, we asked people if they would like to participate or not. When about 150 people said yes, I will participate. But when we actually started, about one third of these people actually participated. We spent a lot of time and energy in these people. It was really people we knew. .... There are many people 'member of the system'. But there seems to be a big difference between being a member and doing your groceries here.*

As indicated by the respondents, there are many reasons why people in the end decide not to participate. For example because they are too busy to invest time in participating, they feel like it is too complicated to do a part of the groceries in another way, they think it is expensive or the pick-up points' location or opening hours are inconvenient. This contradicts with the experiences of the respondents. Once they started participating, they found ordering and picking up food easy and convenient.

#### **7.2.2.4 Farmers**

At this point, a broad variety of farmers participates at the initiative. These farmers appear to be a steady group. Still, to find farmers who are willing and able to participate, and match with the ideals and funnel model of 'Goei Eete' is not easy. Therefore some food products are not as sustainable or animal friendly as many people expect them to be, or are way more expensive than (organic) products in the supermarket. For example the dairy products. These products are produced on a traditional, slower way. This results into an expensive product. An even more expensive product than organic dairy in the supermarket. But the farmers who do produce organic dairy, deliver their products to the conventional food system. They have no need to sell their dairy to 'Goei Eete' because they sell their dairy anyway. One respondent commented:

*(7) If we are talking about 'de Kern', a dairy farm. They do not sell organic dairy, but only artisanal dairy. So milk and yoghurt. I like to buy yoghurt. But I do want it to be organic. But they do not offer organic yoghurt. And if they would offer it, it would likely to be too expensive.*

Besides finding the right farmers and products, it might be hard to communicate with farmers. The idea of redesigning the food supply chain might not resonate with them, which leads to the question who is supporting who? Are the farmers supporting 'Goei Eete' by selling them local products? Or is 'Goei Eete' supporting the farmers by providing them with a higher margin on the products? Nobody from the organization has an answer to this question. There is little communication with the farmers at this point.

At the same time, the farmers do support the initiative. Assuming that if they would not support the initiative if it was not beneficial in any way, there is something in it for them. They can sell their products for a higher price and the buyer of the products is no longer anonymous. Some respondents can imagine that selling food to the complex supply chain and in the end the anonymous consumer is not a lot of fun, and knowing who buys and eats your products is of added value for the farmer. Some respondents also believe that people who buy food at 'Goei Eete' are more interested in food and the actual product than the average consumer. This might be more satisfying for the farmer as well.

In this research, the farmers are not interviewed. The role of the farmer in the initiative, the opportunities for the farmer and the opportunities to strengthen farmer-consumer relationships need to be further explored.

#### 7.2.2.5 Other initiatives

As mentioned earlier, there is assumed to be a market developing for other food systems than the conventional food system. Therefore 'Goei Eete' is not the only initiative in the area. 'Goei Eete' faces competition on a national and regional level. There are other players in the field which were already there, and there are new initiatives developing which see the distribution of food as an opportunity to make money. As the initiator puts it:

*(15) At this moment you see a lot of commercial entrants. So people see business here. This indicates there is an activating demand (for alternative food systems).*

But at the other hand:

*(15) But these other initiatives are often aggressive parties. Which see distribution of food as an opportunity. ... We do not have the same marketing budget as a commercial company.*

According to the initiator, these initiatives often start from a commercial approach and make investments to make profit. They have a different kind of management than 'Goei Eete', which results in having more money and time available to do marketing campaigns and are often more visible than volunteer-based initiatives. These other initiatives seem to gain ground faster than 'Goei Eete'. These parties are working with personnel and aim to make profit, instead of making a change in the food system. An idealistic aspect is advocated or even absent. This can be seen as an opportunity for 'Goei Eete'. Some people do not like the commercial organizations and therefore feel attracted to an initiative like 'Goei Eete'. An experience which illustrates this was the participant observation at the 'Swan Market'. When people saw 'Goei Eete' at 'the Swan Market', they often reacted in a way that they did not like the initiative because they expected it to be too expensive and were afraid to be obliged to long term subscriptions. When explaining the concept of 'Goei Eete', so no long-term commitments, no fixed boxes with foods and the non-profit approach, people started to get interested.

After all, there are multiple players on the field of food provisioning. The initiative tries to keep communication open and transparent with these other initiatives, so they know what the other organizations are working on (Board meeting 13-1-2015). The non-profit, idealistic approach of the 'Goei Eete' is an opportunity to distinguish themselves from other initiatives.

#### 7.2.3 Idealism

'Goei Eete' distinguishes itself from other initiatives by taking an idealistic approach, instead of a commercial one. Making profit is not the most important factor, but designing the food system in another way is. Making an impact can be done in many different ways. Since local food initiatives are relatively new to many people in the Netherlands, there is no perfect example which can be used. The initiative is working on finding its own way to express its values and making a change.

##### 7.2.3.1 The organization

As mentioned earlier, the board members and volunteers of the organization all come from a different background and have different goals in mind for the development of the initiative. Shared is a general concern about the practices in the current, dominant food system the motivation to make a change. The initiative resonates with the concerns of the volunteers and provides with the ability to do something with their energy to react on these concerns. Alone, people might feel powerless, but

working together might make it easier to do something, which feels like making more impact than doing something by yourself.

Coming from different backgrounds leads to disagreements on certain topics. An example of an idealistic discussion is the discussion what kind of foods need to be available via '*Goei Eete*'. From the funnel model all kinds of food must be available, but how to make a decision on what kind of criteria must the food meet? Is the border of 20KM the most important aspect, or must production methods, animal welfare and supporting a particular type of farming be taken into account too? Or is there a limit on meat products on the website because meat is not a sustainable food? These kind of discussions make it hard to come to an agreement on important aspects like marketing strategies. This results in slowing down the process. Or in making decisions without consensus, which might lead to unhappy board members who lose their energy to participate as a volunteer.

#### 7.2.3.2 *Transparency*

The initiative offers organic food, but also non organic food. These non-organic foods are indicated as '*bewust*' or 'conscious' in English. The meaning of this conscious food is not clear. It is not clear how these foods can be distinguished from organic or 'regular' food. But '*Goei Eete*' wants to provide local farms without a certified organic label the opportunity to sell their food as more than 'regular' food. It is not transparent why the farm does not have the label 'organic'. Therefore people might be misled when they see the label 'conscious'. People have their own interpretation on when food is conscious or not, and believe the initiative uses the same interpretation. This is often not the case. For example the consciously produced eggs. People often make the assumption that the chickens are organic, have a lot of space and are able to go outside when they want to. But the eggs come from a 'One-star Better Life' farm. This indicates that they are not a fast growing race, see daylight and have covered space to go outside. The eggs are not necessarily organic. This does not match fully with the expectations people have of the welfare of the chickens. Also the initiative is not transparent about where the food comes from. They state to get the food from a maximum of 20KM, but some foods come from farther away. The initiative does not communicate this on its website.

This leads to discussion within the initiative. It is hard to decide on what products to include and to what kind of regulations and standards the products must comply.

#### 7.2.3.3 *The city*

Some respondents touch upon the culture of the city Tilburg. They cannot fully explain what it is, but they feel like the culture makes it hard to make a change. They experience the culture as rigid and inflexible. Some respondents compare Tilburg to Amsterdam. They see Amsterdam as an emerging, supportive environment where local initiatives stand more chance than they do in Tilburg, and where people are more interested in making a change for the environment. However, they do acknowledge that this culture might not indicate a change in values, but just a go-with-the-flow of the middle- and upper class people.

### 7.3 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter has described the organizational aspects of '*Goei Eete*'. How the initiative developed and what kind of strengths they have and barriers they face. To conclude, the findings in this chapter suggest that a small enterprise like '*Goei Eete*' needs to take into account many aspects.

On the practical level, many barriers have been overcome already to start the initiative. This indicates there is enough knowledge available to create a working system for ordering food and doing payments, the network of the starters of the initiative was and is big enough and social skills are sufficient to find

help and to find farmers to participate, and hygiene standards are met. With this effort, 70 weekly orders are accomplished.

At this point, the initiative wants to grow. This means that the existing structure of the initiative requires some thought and evaluation. Volunteers and board members share the idea of making a change in the food system and buying better foods. But it turns out to be a challenge to take everybody's opinion into account, to allow creativity and to ensure democracy in the initiative. It is hard to organize everybody in such a way that everybody can participate and be happy at the same time.

The wish for growth does not only implicate organizational barriers, but also practical barriers. The current distribution system does not allow for much growth. Besides, there are some idealistic barriers. It needs to be determined via what way growth will be accomplished. For example what farmers will cooperate, and what kind of products will be offered on the website? Volunteers have different expectations and ideas about this, which makes it hard to hear everybody's opinion and take all opinions into account.

After the way to go is determined, a plan needs to be made for communication. According to some respondents, only lowering barriers is probably not enough to get more people involved. A clear communication strategy with clear incentives to participate is needed. As many respondents indicate, humans are creatures of habit. Most people have found a way in the current food system. They prefer a certain supermarket, pick up some products at other shops and like it the way it is now, which makes it hard to let them make a change.

These barriers for change can be seen organizational, but also relate to transition theory. The initiative started as a reaction on the problems related to the current regime. The practices of the initiative, and the activities people need to practice to participate, might not resonate with the current sociotechnical landscape. Therefore it might be hard to find support for the initiative. However, the fact that the initiative is based on idealistic values provides a chance to distinguish itself from the other initiatives that develop around food. People feel attracted to the fact that the initiative is based on volunteers only, more money goes to farmers and participation is completely free of commitments.



## 8 RESULTS: PERSONAL

In the previous chapter organizational aspects resulted from the data related to a transition towards sustainable diets were discussed. This chapter focusses on personal aspects; notably the most important dimensions for participants of the initiative. In the first place, the incentives of respondents to participate at 'Goei Eete' are discussed. Secondly, their perceived benefits of participation are described, followed by the respondents' general characteristics. Then respondents' changes due to participation at the initiative are discussed. Next, respondents' barriers for change are described. Lastly, the results will be discussed and concluded.

### 8.1 WHY DO PEOPLE PARTICIPATE?

The first set of questions of the interviews aimed to identify why people started participating at 'Goei Eete'. First respondents were asked how they found out about the initiative (Table 3). Half of those interviewed (7) reported that they heard about the initiative via friends or family. Four respondents reported they read about the initiative in one of the local newspapers or corresponding websites. One found out about it via a leaflet on one of the pick-up points, and one got to know the organization via an event.

How	Number of respondents
Via friends or family	8
Via local media	4
Via leaflets	1
Via an event	1

Table 3: How did the respondent find out about 'Goei Eete'?

After the question about how respondents found out about the initiative, the respondents were asked why they started participating (Table 4). Three major themes emerged from this question. Namely because they had an interest in buying and eating local food, the convenience of a pick-up point nearby and the freedom of choice you have while participating at 'Goei Eete', which is sometimes not the case in other (local) food initiatives. In some other initiatives you must subscribe for a food box, where you cannot decide yourself what is in the box.

Reason	Number of respondents	Who
Interest in local food	6	(1) (5) (8) (9) (11) (13)
Pick up location	6	(6) (8) (11) (12) (13) (14)
Freedom of choice	4	(1) (4) (8) (12)
Pure products	2	(1) (2)
Knowing where the food comes from	2	(5) (9)
Interest in food	2	(6) (10)
Doing something good	1	(13)
Takes into account CO2 emission	1	(5)
Only organic food is too expensive	1	(2)
Relates to study program	1	(7)
Challenge to prepare a nice meal	1	(1)

Table 4: Reasons for participation

These reasons to start participating might indicate that both idealistic and practical incentives are important to get involved in the initiative. One respondent for example said:

(14) *I knew 'Goei Eete' before. I had heard about it. But if it is this nearby, this available. That really makes it welcoming to participate.*

Another respondent indicated:

(13) *The idea of picking up food from farmers from the surroundings of the city is very appealing. I have grown up with it. I used to live in the village. .... My parents always went to the farmers nearby to get for example asparagus, fruit, strawberries and potatoes. I really liked that. That was a great feeling. Now I live in Tilburg. Of course I can cycle to all farmers to pick up food, but I am too busy to do so. When I read about 'Goei Eete', I thought it was perfect. I only had to cycle to the pick-up point to pick up all the foods I wanted. And 'Goei Eete' goes to all the farmers for me. The only thing I have to do is ordering the food. That is so easy!*

## 8.2 BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

Via the next set of questions, I tried to understand why people like to participate in the initiative. The overall responses to these questions were positive. Many reasons were given why people do appreciate the initiative. The two themes as used above, practical and norms and values related incentives, are still applicable here. An extra theme can be added, namely the personal benefits people perceive when participating. The following table (Table 5) gives an overview of why people like to participate and what they perceive as benefits of participation.

Practical	Norms and values	Personal benefits
Order online	Support local farmer	Pure products
Pick up all products at once	Bypass current food system / distribution system	Taste and quality
Price and quality	Local food	Fresh
Noncommittal	Buying food in a conscious way	Food looks and smells good
Does not have to go to the (super)market	You do not know what you buy in the supermarket	Likes to be working with food
Does not have to go to the local farmer him/herself	Know where your food comes from	Matches with 'conscious lifestyle'
Easy to order and pick up	Reduce food miles	More nutrients in the food
Fast	Support local initiatives	It feels good to participate
Does not have to wait for checkout	The feeling 'Goei Eete' offers better food	More trust in the food and farmer because you know where it comes from
Easy communication with the farmer	More human, not only focusing on making profit	Buy other types of vegetables you wouldn't buy in the supermarket
Make food choices at home instead of in the supermarket	Ensure to consume seasonal products	Inspiration for new vegetables and recipes
Do not have to think about groceries	Support the initiative	Production methods are more visible
Cheaper than organic food	Fewer pesticides	Enjoys to follow the seasons
Convenient	The ability to choose for a farm which treats products, animals and environment well	The right balance between organic and conventional food
	Support a different society	

Table 5: Perceived benefits of participation

The table illustrates that there are about as many practical as norms and values related reasons as personal benefits to be identified.

Also respondents were asked if it was likely they would keep participating in the future. All respondents indicated yes. Some indicated that the way the initiative was organized now, was perfect for them. But they were not sure if for example the pick-up point would disappear, they would still order food at the initiative. And some respondents had their doubts about the values and practices of '*Goei Eete*'. If there would be no consensus about these values and practices, or if it will be decided to choose a direction which does not resonate with the values of the respondents, they are likely to drop out.

### 8.3 PERSONALITY TRAITS

When stepping away from incentives to participate, personal interests around food, lifestyle and work and some other personality traits came up. All respondents had an interest in supporting local economy, health and food, environment or a combination of multiple themes. Often participants had this interest before they started participating, and most often the respondents saw '*Goei Eete*' as an extension of their interests and preferences. The next couple of paragraphs aim to illustrate these personality traits.

#### 8.3.1 Health and food

The following table (Table 6) illustrated characteristics respondents have which are related to health and food:

Characteristic	Amount of people	Who
Has a vegetable garden	5	#01, #04, #07, #08, #14
Used to order food at another initiative	5	#04, #08, #11, #12, #13
Reports a food allergy	6	#02, #03, #05, #08, #12, #14
Experience with local food from childhood	3	#02, #06, #13
Knowledge about food or read a lot about food.	3	#02, #03, #08
Enjoys cooking	2	#01, #08
Job related to food	2	#04, #10
Eats vegetarian or eats meat once a week	6	#01, #02, #03, #07, #08, #11
Eats meat twice a week	2	#04, #06

Table 6: Respondents' characteristics

With regard to food, five of the respondents own a vegetable garden. Also people I met during the observations mentioned they own a vegetable garden. Therefore they are used to eat seasonal vegetables from their own garden. Secondly, five respondents already participated in a food initiative before they started participating at '*Goei Eete*'. Some of the respondents indicate these initiatives did not correspond with their needs or expectations because they were based on a weekly subscription so they could not pick out the foods themselves. This was particularly inconvenient for people who have their own vegetable garden. Since they produce products themselves they do not need extra of these products but do need to complement their own produce with some other products. At '*Goei Eete*' people can decide if and what they want to order, so the products from '*Goei Eete*' are complementary to what they already produce themselves, and not extra. One respondent said she already ordered vegetables at another local food initiative in the city. For her '*Goei Eete*' provides the opportunity to buy meat, dairy and fruit locally. Another respondent explained she just moved to Tilburg. She used to

order food at a local initiative at her old hometown and therefore started looking for an initiative in Tilburg too. Lastly, another respondent did not like her previous local food initiative anymore because they extended their assortment with non-local products to ensure variety in products. Therefore she changed to 'Goei Eete'.

With regard to health and food, six of the respondents are allergic to certain types of foods. Therefore they like to buy their food at 'Goei Eete' because the initiative mainly offers pure and/or unprocessed foods. For example processed meats many Dutch people like to eat on their sandwich for breakfast and lunch, like ham, are more pure than meat products from the supermarket. One of the respondents has a wide variety of allergies. She explained why it is important for her to know what is in her food:

*(12) Because I cannot eat a lot of products on bread, I used to buy meat products at Ekoplaza. Meat products are usually safe for me. .... At Ekoplaza they used to have meat products without additives. But they have changed their products too. They added all kind of herbs in the meat. Like mustard. But I am allergic to mustard. I find it strange that they changed to products. While at 'Goei Eete', the meat products are pure. There is no lactose in it, or no mustard. .... It is a product as it is supposed to be.*

Resulting from the data, three people had experience with local food from their childhood. Another three claim to have a lot of knowledge about food and like to read all about it. Two respondents indicate they really enjoy cooking. Two people have or had jobs which are food related.

On the nexus of food, health and environment, six respondents reported to be vegetarian or consumed meat only once a week. Two more respondents reported to eat meat twice a week and fish once a week. It possibly illustrates that these respondents already adapted their diet to take into account health and/or environment. So participation at the initiative did not come out of the blue, it relates to the respondents' interests in food, health and environment.

### 8.3.2 Environment

A smaller number of those interviewed mentioned environment to be an important characteristic of their lifestyle. Most respondents do care about the environment and the world around them, but are not taking too much effort to protect it. What most people do is separate waste, turn off electricity, try to not waste too much water and try to avoid spilling food. Some try to use the car as little as possible. But interestingly, three respondents have had an interest in environment since they were students in the seventies or eighties. Two of these respondents highlight they think animal welfare is very important. And these respondents report a bigger preference for organic food too. As one of these respondent puts it:

*(3) Look, I have been working on being good for the earth since I was 20. ... For me it is so important that the earth is being treated well. I mean, we are allowed to live on it, but the earth must keep on going. Sometimes people say: 'I don't believe if eating organic food is good for our health'. But I am not doing it for me alone, but to ensure we are able to keep on living here. And our children. And our grandchildren too.*

One of these respondents mentioned that the way society is behaving is a bit of a hip way. She reads messages in sustainability networks on the internet and this is her reaction on it:

*(11) We started during our student days. With more conscious consumerism. Well, the easier everything is available, the easier it is. .... Lately I have noticed, many people pretend they are reinventing the wheel. They are trying to live as conscious as possible. But then I feel like we are doing this since our student days....*

One respondent is a member of a household where there is a lot of attention for sustainability. They are involved in several initiatives related to sustainability, for example in a car-sharing platform in the village they live in. Another respondent said she started to care more for environment since she traveled to Australia. There she saw the Aboriginals living in harmony with the earth and she started wondering why we are not able to do so in the West. This shows again that the respondents have a certain concern or interest in the environment, which makes participation a logical choice to strengthen their practices around their norms and values.

### 8.3.3 Local economy

A couple of respondents like the idea of supporting the local economy. They prefer to buy food at the local butcher, bakery or grocery. They also like the idea of supporting local farmers. They see '*Goei Eete*' as an easy way to actually buy food at the local farmers and therefore support them. One of the respondents never buys fresh foods in the supermarket and does not know the prices of fresh foods in the supermarket.

Some respondents relate the initiative itself to the local economy in a bigger perspective. They believe the initiative has the ability to strengthen the local economy. That the initiative is more than about buying local vegetables. They suggest another economy to be emerging. An economy where people stand the chance to fix problems themselves, without too much involvement of the government. A local economy where smaller enterprises stand a chance and where unemployed or disapproved people can reintegrate in society to live a more meaningful life.

A small number of those interviewed (three respondents) suggested that to make a change, not only the food system and the local economy have to change, but also the bigger economical system. The system as it is now is perceived as too anonymous and too iniquitous. The rich earn more and more, while the poor earn less and less. Making money is too important, while we should start focusing on finding a new balance in the world.

Worth mentioning is that all respondents I discussed the number of participants (70) in the initiative with, were very surprised that there were so little other participants. They always felt like they were a member of a way bigger network than 70. They also feel special that they are a member of such a small network. In a way, the network is bigger than 70 participants. More than 70 people participate at the initiative, but not all on a weekly basis.

### 8.3.4 '*Goei Eete*'

The interviews were concluded with a question about what the respondent perceived to be '*Goei Eete*', good food. The respondents were allowed to give their own description, and could therefore provide more than one aspect. Table 7 provides an overview of what eleven respondents attributes people define when they are asked to describe good food.

Attribute	Number of respondents
Healthy/ not too much calories	6
Respect for earth and environment	6
Pure product/ no additives	6
Taste	3
Local	3
Fair price	3
Transparent	2
Animal welfare	2
Honestly produced	2
Quality	1
Fresh	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>

Table 7 : What do respondents perceive as good food (*goei eete*)?

Healthy, respect for earth and environment and the purity of products are perceived as most important. Supporting the farmer is perceived as not that important, while this is one of the main goals of the initiative. This possibly indicates that people are not as much aware of the problems related to farming and economy as they are of the problems related to health and environment. There is a lot of information in the media about environment, and there is an increased amount of attention for health. Messages about environment and health are often presented and repeated. But there is not as much attention for the struggles of farmers in the media, which

## 8.4 CHANGE DUE TO PARTICIPATION

To go a bit deeper into what people get out of participation, via another set of questions, respondents were asked if they experienced any kind of personal development or change while they were participating at '*Goei Eete*'. For example because due to the food they are eating, because of ordering at the website or because of the information the initiative provides.

Participation has generally an impact on three aspects, namely awareness and knowledge, values, and behavioral change. Interestingly, all respondents indicated some way of personal growth or personal change. However, for some people this change was small because they only had been participating for a short amount of time, or because they already had a lot of knowledge about sustainability and/or food. But some people did experience a development because of '*Goei Eete*' and see it as a personal process to make a change.

### 8.4.1 Awareness and knowledge

Ordering food at '*Goei Eete*' and reading its newsletter, Facebook and Twitter page made people more aware of seasons and seasonal food, food production, the food system as such and what is available in the surroundings of the city.

#### *Seasons*

When doing all groceries in the supermarket, many products are available year-round. The only difference is a minor variation in price. At '*Goei Eete*', foods are only available for purchase when they are in season in the surroundings of the city. If they are not in season, they are simple not available:

*(9) It is really fun that they share information about the availability of products. For example because it was a bad winter. That brings you 'back to earth'. Than you realize that is the way it works.*

This creates awareness about what types of foods grow in which period of the year. A side effect is that people see what products are available in the surroundings of the city. This results into a smaller variety of products than in the supermarket. In the supermarket, people see the product and don't know how to cook it, and are more likely to buy a product they are unfamiliar with. Because people order food from the initiative at home, they can find information about the products and recipes to prepare before they order. The initiative itself also provides recipes to prepare the food. Therefore they are more likely to try a 'new' product than if they would see the product in the supermarket:

*(6) I think it is funny we eat more kinds of vegetables than we were used to. When I bought my vegetables in the supermarket, you easily pick French beans or broccoli. Even in winter. I didn't take seasons into account. .... We started eating so much more products. For example pumpkins, celery root, beetroots and parsnip.*

#### **Local versus organic**

Some respondents indicate they started thinking about organic and local food. Some believed certified organic food was the best way to go. But since they participate at the initiative, they started thinking about the benefits of local food. The food does not have to travel far, so it has stronger flavors and a longer shelf life. Some respondents started questioning if environmental benefits of organic food from far away does weigh up to the environmental benefits of local food. One respondent said:

*(2) I used to buy for example an organic pineapple from South America. The organic tomatoes from Albert Heijn are from Spain. A year or two ago I didn't even look where products came from. The only thing I wanted was an organic product. Now I usually decide to not have tomatoes.*

They all believe that local food must be better for the environment than food from far away. Some also believe that local non-organic food is better than organic food from far. Another benefit of local food is the ability to 'check' production processes. If a product is non-organic, it is easier to find out for example how much pesticides are being used to grow the product. This provides a new insight, non-certified organic foods might not be as 'bad' as people thought in the first place because for some products fewer pesticides were used than they expected, better care was given to the soil or more effort was made in animal welfare.

#### **Food production**

The website of the initiative gives an insight in production methods of the farmers where the food comes from. They indicate if food is organically produced or not, and provides links to farmers' websites to provide people with the ability to read more about their production methods. Respondents say they have the feeling they know more about food production of the farmers which are on the website of 'Goei Eete', than about the food production of supermarket foods. Even though they never checked the website of the farmer. One respondent did take the effort to phone call the farmer about animal welfare of the laying hens. Some respondents would like to have more information about the farmer and production methods on the website of 'Goei Eete'. They explain not to have time to check all the websites themselves, and would appreciate it if all information would be available at one point.

The idea of knowing where the farm is, the ability to cycle to the farm and see it yourself and to see photos of the farm on the website, makes some respondents feel like they have a closer connection to the farmer. The product does not feel as impersonal as a product from the supermarket. One respondent tells about her experience:

*(9) Sometimes it is very funny. For example we bought cheese. The farmer cuts the cheese and probably cut 30 grams less. Than the shortage of 30 grams is stuck to the big piece. It is still cheese though. It makes me realize that food is work of man. It makes me happy, to realize that food depends on people. You would never see that if you buy your food in the supermarket.*

#### **Food system**

Some respondents begin to oversee the food system a little bit better. For example on certification labels. 'Goei Eete' does offer food which does not match all criteria of organic food. One respondent mentioned she started realizing that farmers sometimes does not have a label because this label is too expensive for the farmer. But that does not directly indicate that the food is not good. Her way of seeing this labels for organic food had become a bit more nuanced. Multiple respondents started realizing how long the supply chain is and feel like this is unnecessary.

*(6) I feel like it takes forever to get the food from the farmer to my plate if the food travels along the entire supply chain.*

Most respondents start realizing how little a farmer gets paid for the farmer's produce, and that a lot of money goes to the distribution system. Therefore they like to order food at the initiative, which ensures them that a higher percentage of the money goes directly to the farmer.

#### **Surroundings of the city**

A couple of respondents explained that they became more aware of the surroundings of the city. They know now what kind of farms are where, and which products it produces and in what time of the year the products are ready to eat:

*(13) Sometimes I buy grapes in winter at the supermarket. But isn't that ridiculous? There is enough food available here.*

And because the respondents have some more information about the farm, they say they are more likely to actually visit the farm. People become aware of the amount of farm shops in the area too. Because they are more aware about the products each farm sells, one respondent indicates it is more likely she will visit the farm shop if she is nearby. One respondent really enjoyed to be aware of an organic care farm nearby.

One respondent started thinking about the food system during the interview. One question in the interview was about why the respondent thinks the farmer participates at the initiative. Together with some other respondents, this respondent never thought about the benefits of the farmer but only about personal benefits of participating at 'Goei Eete'. After asking this question she started thinking about it and realized she actually did buy food directly from the farmer. The only difference with 'Goei Eete' is that people do not have to travel to that particular farmer. And by buying food directly from the farmer, the farmer would indeed make more money for his product. Realizing this, she felt more satisfied with participation at the initiative.

#### **8.4.2 Values**

It is hard to check if people actually changed values. And if this shift in values happened due to participation at 'Goei Eete'. Some respondents said they experienced a change in actual values. For example in animal welfare. They started to think more about animal welfare and started to find it more and more important. Some respondents mentioned a change in values in caring for the planet. They started realizing that if we, as a society, will keep on living as we live now, the future will not look that bright. Therefore they are now willing to make a change, which they were not before participation.



Supporting farmers and not supporting the managers of the supply chain was often perceived as very important. But it is hard to determine if people have always found this important or they started to find it important due to participation. Nevertheless, respondents have the feeling that the physical and emotional distance to the farmer is decreased because of the initiative. People might start to experience a connection with the farmer and therefore find it more important to support him or her.

#### 8.4.3 Behavioral change

The majority of respondents experienced that it was hard to get used to ordering food at 'Goei Eete'. Some respondents were not frequent purchasers, which they attributed to the fact that it was hard to remind themselves of ordering the food or scheduling the pick-up. For people who are used to it, ordering required a change in mindset and behavior to decide what groceries you want to buy for the next week. And instead of buying food in the supermarket, people must order their food online. One respondent said:

*(5) It was not an obstacle for me. I just had to get used to it. In the first weeks, the moment of ordering was over before I knew it. But you learn to think about it at the right moment. It needs to become a habit. And changing habits requires time.*

Besides the behavioral change of buying food in a different way, most respondents say they changed behavior after participating at 'Goei Eete'. The most mentioned behavioral change was checking where foods come from in the supermarket. From now on, if they have the choice between apples from the Netherlands or apples from New Zealand, they will pick the apples from the Netherlands which are most often available year round. Energy for storage of the apples for a year is likely to not been taken into account here. Some people stopped buying certain foods when they are not in season. And if some people did buy a product which is not in season, they experience the products have little flavor. The comment below illustrates the respondent even regrets buying unseasonal foods and sees the initiative as a motivation to eat seasonal products only:

*(13) Very sneaky I know, but sometimes I do buy a couple of tomatoes in the supermarket in winter. They obviously do not taste so good. There is very little flavor in it. But I do buy them. Afterwards I ask myself why I did it. Once you are used to it, I realized I can be very creative with seasonal products only. .... I like to be forced to eat seasonal products. This results into products of higher quality than if you buy products from greenhouses or wherever they are from..*

At the other hand, people experience that it is hard to buy all products locally. Some products are not available in the region, but are perceived to be very normal for respondents. Therefore they are not likely to stop buying the products:

*(12) For example I buy oranges. It is not possible to buy oranges from the Netherlands. That crosses the limit. If I can buy a product locally, I will. Otherwise, I will just buy it from abroad.*

Buying food at the initiative enhanced the creativity of a couple of respondents. When they buy a new product, or have bought the same product a couple of times, they start to search for new recipes to prevent the meals from getting boring. Respondents enjoy eating new products and start preparing other dishes than they usually do.

One respondent said she started thinking about products she used besides food. Now she is eating pure foods because it feels safer to know what is in the food, she extended this idea to cleaning products too. Now she buys organic cleaning products only. One respondent started appreciating

nature more. She feels like the culture we live in, is a materialistic culture. Also due to 'Goei Eete', she started realizing that nature has a lot to offer too.

#### 8.4.4 Processes

Four respondents actually mentioned their behavioral change towards more sustainable diets as a process. For these four people, not only food played a role in this change. Their entire lifestyle undergoes a certain kind of process. Therefore they did not use the term sustainable diets as such, but used words like 'more conscious living'. 'Goei Eete' facilitates a part of this process. But it is not the initiative alone. Friends, family and media play a big role for them too. They acknowledge it is hard to make a sustainable change from one day to the other. Therefore they take small steps every once in a while to take better care of the environment and their body.

#### 8.4.5 Other sources

Most people do indicate that not only 'Goei Eete' has an impact on their lifestyle, but also other aspects like friends and family and media. If respondents are trying to live a more conscious life, they see friends and family who live a conscious lifestyle as an example. But to implement the same lifestyle is sometimes not that easy:

*(2) (about her friend) She eats vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds. If I eat at her place, the food is really basic. Rice and vegetables. And when I am having such food at her place, it just tastes good. But if I eat it at home, I feel like I miss something. She is really good at it. I couldn't do it. I have too little discipline.*

Some respondents mention there is a lot more information available about food than in the past. There are documentaries, blogs, articles in the newspaper, cookbooks etcetera where people can gather information about food. Several respondents get inspiration from such media. For example for new recipes, to know what kind of foods are healthy or unhealthy, animal welfare problems and the uneven distribution in the supply chain. One respondent's daughter, age 15, was reading a Dutch lifestyle blog. The author of the blog is vegetarian. Therefore the daughter wants to be a vegetarian too.

#### 8.4.6 Questions

At the same time, all these inputs raise questions about food and the food system. Respondents wonder for example how food from far away can be this cheap, if organic food is better for health and environment, what kinds of food are healthy and after all, how to create a reality from all the different input they get from the media. For example:

*(5) In the supermarket I check where the food comes from. Especially in summer. And when the French beans come from Senegal, I really wonder 'where are the French beans from here?!' I mean, they are here now. But probably they are too expensive. I just don't understand. How can they be cheaper than the beans from around the corner, if they have to travel by plane to get here?*

*(9) M: The dietitian prescribes soy milk instead of cow milk. But Aafke has read on the internet that soy milk has its drawbacks too. But what remains? What alternatives do we have? F: "Those alternatives were 'wrong' too. But almond milk could be an alternative." M: But we can't drink cow milk. And soy milk is no good too. How far do you want to go? You will end up with nothing..*

This indicates that they do not only care about buying local food, but that they engage in wider aspects of the food system.

## 8.5 BARRIERS FOR CHANGE

A big part of the respondents perceive barriers that inhibit them for making a change towards more sustainable diets. These barriers are described in the following paragraphs. The barriers they see for others to make a change are described here too.

### 8.5.1 Practical

The majority of the respondents have a fulltime job and/or children. They see themselves as busy people. They perceived doing groceries in another way as a struggle. Some perceived bigger struggles than others. In general people found it hard to get used to ordering food before Tuesday evening and to make sure to pick up the food on the set opening hours of the pick-up points. They argue it also requires some planning to decide what foods they would like to buy for the next week. This in contrast to the supermarket, where you have the ability to enter the shop and decide what you would like to buy. It happens seldom that a product is not available in the supermarket. The location and opening hours of the pick-up points must correspond with people's schedules too. If people are not able to pick up the food within the time the pick-up point is open, or if people have to travel far, they are not likely to participate. Respondents have found a way that works them. For example:

*(12) I always pick up my food at the university on Thursday. Organizationally, that is the most convenient for us. I always drop my daughter at the club on Thursday at four p.m. I drive by the pick-up point when I get back, when the food has just been delivered.*

Another respondent said:

*(11) I knew the initiative existed. I had seen it before. But the pick-up points were inconvenient. And I am not very good at planning. When they started a pick-up point at the 'Sporzone', I picked my food up at that pick-up point. But I knew they would start a pick-up point at the university too. My husband works at the university. I only have to ask him if he can pick up the vegetables. That is very easy!*

The initiative puts a lot of effort in taking away these kind of barriers. They are working on more pick-up points to make it easier for people to pick up their food and therefore more attractive to participate. But as mentioned before, people find reasons related to norms and values, and own benefits from participation important too. There is not much focus on these aspects.

However, if people have found time and energy to change their daily routine, they have to take into account family members too. Not all family members are happy with other foods or reducing for example meat consumption. One respondent said:

*(13) I don't really like meat. If it was up to me I would eat vegetarian dishes more often. But my boyfriend, he is just really into meat.*

As discussed earlier, people have many questions about the food system. Most respondents want to explore the food system more and want to buy more of their weekly groceries in another way than in the supermarket. But they feel like they do not have time to do so. Or they perceive the food system as too complex to investigate. As one respondent put it:

*(9) It drives you crazy when you start reading about food. What you are 'allowed' to eat and what not. And tomorrow 'they' say something else. I will just keep in touch with my body. To decide what is good or not.*

To increase the educational role of the initiative, 'Goei Eete' might be able to play a role by providing more information the food system to help people with making 'better' choices. Not as much

information about nutrition, but for example information on food certification related to animal welfare and information to make food choices which decrease the impact on environment.

#### 8.5.2 Supermarkets

Not all products are not available on a local basis, resulting that these products are not available via 'Goei Eete'. Therefore all respondents buy products in the supermarket too. Because people have to go to the supermarket anyway, there are more likely to buy products they can buy via the initiative in the supermarket. One of the board members said:

*(10) Which part of the weekly groceries do we do at 'Goei Eete'? We are constantly talking about the number of orders. But some people only order food for seven euros. But for the system it would be better if everybody would order for 30 euros. I buy four crates of food in the supermarket, and only one crate comes from 'Goei Eete'. so a very big share of my weekly groceries still go to the supermarket.*

People have a need for certain products. Products that have become available at all times. Therefore they got used to the presence and low price of the products and take them for granted. It seems to be hard for people to make a change.

#### 8.5.3 Trust

Many participants order food at 'Goei Eete' because they distrust the current conventional food system. They are looking for other ways to buy food next to the supermarket. They have confidence in 'Goei Eete' selling the food the participant perceives as good food. But in practice this does not work out. For example the egg farm. It sells eggs with *Beter Leven 'een ster'* (Better Life One Star). This indicates that the chicken have a little bit more space to walk around. But the participants have the idea that the eggs are *Beter leven 'drie sterren'* (Better Life Three Stars) and/or organic. Also some of the products come from farther away than the indicated 20KM and the meaning of 'conscious' food varies. This comment of one of the respondent indicates the amount of trust in the products:

*(8) You know that the products are produced with love and care. I mean, you never know what you buy in the supermarket. What happened to these products? But I do have trust in the food of 'Goei Eete'. In the fact that the farmer has put more effort in it than strictly necessary. That everything is done to take nature and the product into account.*

Since participants often do not have the time or energy to look more into the food system, they trust 'Goei Eete' as the right alternative with easy access. But there are some controversies on what is 'good' or not. If people believe the food of 'Goei Eete' is as 'good' as they expect it to be, they take aspects which they perceive as 'good' for granted. If they do this, they are likely to stop looking further into the food of the initiative and other alternatives.

#### 8.5.4 Spreading the word

Many participants discuss participation at 'Goei Eete' with friends and family. Participants perceive participating as easy, convenient and doing something good and therefore like to spread the word. When people discuss the initiative with others, they often get positive reactions. But on the question if they had ever persuaded somebody to join the initiative, respondents often report they had not. It seems to be hard to persuade others to join. Many participants experience that people stick with their usual habits and need to be provided with a very good reason to change their habits. They see participation as time inefficient and inconvenient. It is often hard to understand for the current participants why others do not feel like participating:

*(6) I talked about 'Goei Eete' with somebody who is struggling with her health. But the only argument she had to not participate was 'it is too expensive'. I was like, can you really not think a step further than the costs?! If you are this ill.. I did not ask her if she eats organic. Probably not. It really disappointed me. This is an example that illustrates that it is hard. Even though I really believed so many people can be triggered to participate. While the people in my environment are relatively conscious.*

People also have different expectations when they hear about the initiative. One respondent said that people expect that food that directly comes from the farmer to be cheaper than food from the supermarket. But the idea of 'Goei Eete' is to pay the farmer the money that otherwise would have gone to the distribution chain. People do not realize this much money goes to distribution and the food prices in the supermarket are often not unrealistic for the farmer to make a proper living. They are not aware that the low price they pay in the supermarket comes at a cost somewhere else. On the other hand, participants experience that friends or family members do not want to participate because it is unclear where the food comes from and how it is produced. They would like to have more insight in the food than 'Goei Eete' provides at this point.

Another experience of respondents is that they try to convince other people to participate. But that people, as long as they see no reason to change, are so much used to their habits that they will not make a change. People have certain preferences for supermarkets because the supermarket happened to be nearby, has a sufficient amount of parking spots or offers certain products. If they like a place to do groceries, they are not likely to switch. Certainly if they have to take more effort for this 'other place' to do groceries.

Most respondents find it very hard to emphasize with people who are not willing to respond on the difficulties of the food system. This might be problematic because people who start such an initiative or who do participate, do not identify with people who do not. Therefore it is hard to find a way to trigger the people in the group of non-participants. After all, all respondents I discussed the number of participants with, are surprised they are a part of the group of 'only' 70 participants in the initiative.

## 8.6 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

### 8.6.1 Start

When the respondents heard of the initiative, mostly from friends and family or via the local media, they started participating because they had a special interest in food and perceived the initiative as a convenient way to buy local food with a freedom of choice which some other initiatives do not offer. Respondents for example own a vegetable garden, used to order food at another initiative, eat vegetarian or very little meat or report any kind of food allergy which demonstrates their interest in food before they start participating at 'Goei Eete'. They are already involved in making 'better' or 'other' food choices and have their incentive to participate present. So when these people see promotion materials about the initiative or hear about the initiative via friends and family, they are immediately triggered to look for more information. People who do not have these interests might not look at the poster or website and might not be triggered to look for participation and therefore start to participate. This might indicate they are likely to be left out, while there is a lot in it for them.

### 8.6.2 Benefits

'Goei Eete' provides an alternative to the conventional food system. It is just as expensive or a bit more expensive than products from the supermarket, but cheaper than most foods from the organic supermarket. The respondents experience a lot of benefits from participation. Namely practical,

idealistic and personal benefits. Respondents perceive many practical barriers and find it very easy to order food at the initiative. They also find it hard to understand why others refuse to participate. Many respondents enjoy the idea of supporting an idealistic initiative as well. They like to support the local farmer, local initiatives and local economy, and feel better when they participate in an initiative which is not focused on making profit. Some hope to support a different kind of society while participating in at the initiative. Personal benefits seem to be important as well. Once people started ordering, they enjoyed the foods' freshness, taste and smell. Often it is believed there are more nutrients in the food and therefore the foods are perceived as healthier than the food from the conventional food system. Besides, it feels good to participate. Respondents have the feeling the distance between them and the farmer is smaller, because they know who the farmer is, where the farm is located and the ability to contact the farmer to ask questions. All these benefits have led to a high amount of trust in the organization.

Not many respondents have a big interest in the environment, and a couple respondents enjoy the idea of supporting the local economy.

### 8.6.3 Change

After the respondents started participating, they got more knowledge and awareness about food, the food system and seasonal products. They also got a better understanding of what kind of foods are available in the surroundings of the city. Some respondents indicated that they started checking at products on country of origin. If it came from too far, they started looking for another product of the same type which came from the Netherlands. But if foods are not available from the Netherlands at all, like oranges and bananas, they did not intend to buy another type of food. Many respondents started trying foods they used to be unfamiliar with and became more creative with cooking. Often change did not happen because of participation at the initiative only. Other aspects played a role too.

### 8.6.4 Barriers

After discussing who participates and why, and what people perceive, the barriers for change will be discussed next. In the first place, it is hard for people to make a change and fit ordering food at the initiative in their lives. Other food outlets are always there, ordering food at '*Goei Eete*' happens only once a week. And because not all foods can be ordered at the initiative, all people visit supermarkets every once in a while. Once there, they see offers from the supermarket which are hard to refuse. However, most respondents do understand that the prices of foods in the supermarkets are unrealistically low, and therefore buy only products who are not for sale at '*Goei Eete*' in the supermarket.

As mentioned earlier, many respondents have a high amount of trust in the initiative. They assume the food is as good as they expect it to be. But the initiative does not take all aspects into account and is not transparent about all farmers (more on transparency in chapter 9). Therefore the high amount of trust is a bit like a short-cut to not have to think about the food you buy. Some assumptions respondents make, are not met within the initiative and do not all resonate with the offered food. Consequently, some respondents stop thinking about what they buy because they assume that what they buy at the initiative is good.

Also, people perceive the food from '*Goei Eete*' to be of higher quality because it is fresher, and holds therefore more nutrients than food from the conventional food system. People are also likely to stop or reduce buying foods from far away, and start buying more local foods in the supermarket. It is not necessarily true that food from nearby is better for the environment, but that is the assumption people make.

## 9 RESULTS: ADDRESSING SUSTAINABLE DIETS

In this chapter I will describe how the initiative is addressing the concept of sustainable diets. There are multiple frameworks and dimensions which describe sustainable diets. I will combine several frameworks and use the dimensions as described in the FAO report “Sustainable diets and biodiversity” (Burlingame & Dernini, 2010). According to the FAO, there are six dimensions which need to be taken into account when talking about sustainable diets (Burlingame and Dernini 2010). Namely quality, social values, environment, health, economy and governance. Together with the definition of sustainable diets of the FAO (Burlingame and Dernini 2010) and Lairon’s framework there are many aspects which need to be taken into account when assessing food or food system on sustainability (Table 8).

FAO Definition	FAO Framework	Lairon’s framework
Low environmental impact	Quality	Food and nutrient needs, food security, accessibility
Food and nutrition security	Social values	Cultural heritage, skills
Healthy life for present and future generations	Environment	Biodiversity, environment and climate
Respectful for biodiversity and ecosystems	Health	Well-being and health
Culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable	Economy	Equity, fair trade
Safe and healthy	Governance	Eco-friendly, local, seasonal foods
Optimizing natural and human resources		

Table 8: Overview of multiple frameworks for sustainable diets

### 9.1 QUALITY

#### 9.1.1 Freshness, taste and smell

‘Goei Eete’ offers only seasonal products which are available. The products the farmer has to offer are displayed on the website to be ordered. The food is most of the time very fresh. The food is picked up at the farmers on Thursday, where in most cases the food is harvested on Wednesday or even Thursday morning. The customers of ‘Goei Eete’ can pick up their food crates on Thursday afternoon, Friday and Saturday. The vegetables are distributed with the sand still on it which gives the impression that the produce is more natural or real. Therefore they might not look as attractive as they look in the supermarket, but they are not washed or chemically treated which results into a pure product. But most often this is not seen as a problem. It makes people realize that food comes from the farmer and from the earth, and not from the supermarket.

*(1) I really like it to pick up my crate, with real, pure products in it. Just pure, with the sand still on it. It makes you realize that the food comes directly from the farmer.*

Many respondents mention that the food products have a stronger taste and smell, probably because the foods are this fresh. This is highly appreciated by the respondents. Meat products are often seen as pure, without unnecessary additives.

*(2) Well, that the products are good and fresh of course. In general, seasonal products have a long shelf life. The cabbages.. It just looks good! That is so much more fun than pre-cut kale for example. And the smell, if you cut the kale yourself!*

#### 9.1.2 Transparency

'Goei Eete' offers a wide range of products. They try to select farmers and products which have something extra or better than the food from the conventional food system, mentioned as 'conscious' food. This provides a broad group of people with the ability to buy products at the initiative. But it also provides the opportunity to farmers distinguish their product from other products because of this 'extra' aspect. If the food goes into the conventional food system, this 'extra' is lost because their food is not certified as organic. Therefore the food ends up together with all the other foods. 'Goei Eete' provides the opportunity for farmers to sell their food as more than conventional, but not fully organic.

The initiative tries to be as transparent as possible and provide as much information as possible about the farmers and production methods. Claiming to be transparent results into more trust in the initiative and its products. But the initiative does not provide information about everything. On the website, there is sometimes no information about the farmer to be found. Or the food has the label 'conscious' on the website, where it is not clear why this product is more conscious than a product from another farm. This happens not necessarily because the initiative does not want to provide the information, but more because they did not find the time yet to gather the information and put it on the website. People who order food have their own idea on what good food is. When there is no information available about the product, they easily assume that the food complies to the standards of their own definition of good food. During the field work I often noticed that people expect more from the food than the food fulfils. For example on using pesticides on fruits and vegetables, animal welfare and food miles. So sometimes people think they are consuming 'better' products than they actually buy and eat. Social values

#### 9.1.3 Equality and justice

The structure of the initiative is designed to provide everybody with the opportunity to participate. There is a wide variety of products available. Some organic, some non-organic. They intentionally do not focus on specific products such as only organic or biodynamic food, or only fruits and vegetables. The idea behind this is to work with a funnel model (Figure 8). By providing a broad basis of products, many people might feel attracted to participate. Once people are in, it is expected people become more aware of the problems regarding to food and the products available in the surroundings of the city. The next stage is participation in the initiative. Once people start participating, they become involved so they start promoting the initiative to other people like friends and family. The last phase is to get the feeling of a community and identity of doing something good for the world and become very active in this community. In this way the community is considered to be open for everybody and keeps expanding.



The initiative only offers food which is locally grown. This results into a variety of Dutch produce. This Dutch produce might be seen as old fashioned or as traditional by the younger people in the city. And as in most cities in the Netherlands, not only native Dutch people live in the city of Tilburg. The food which is offered might not be appropriate for everybody.

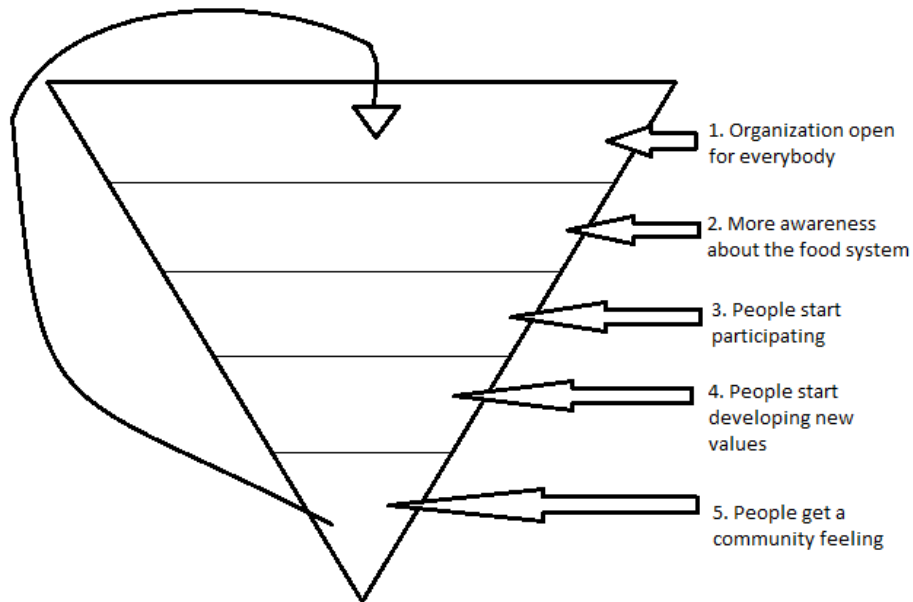


Figure 8: Funnel model 'Goei Eete'

#### 9.1.4 Pleasure

Participants of 'Goei Eete' enjoy the food because it is perceived to be fresher and richer in flavor and scent than products from the supermarket. But they also enjoy their food more because they know the food comes from a local farmer. Some have the feeling they are eating 'better' vegetables, others enjoy the idea of supporting a local farmer or supporting the local economy. Reducing food miles is regarded as an important aspect to participate too. These comments indicate the pleasure people experience:

*(8) You just know the products are made with love. I mean, you never know about the products you buy in the supermarket. What they did with it. We assume that the products from 'Goei Eete' got more attention than strictly necessary. That farmers do all what is possible to keep nature and the products as clear as possible.*

*(9) I feel good about it. I do have the feeling I am doing something good. And that I am eating better vegetables.*

#### 9.1.5 Trust

Eating food from the farmers in the surroundings of the city results into a high level of trust. People feel like they know what they eat and appreciate the idea of knowing who produced their food. It feels transparent for many people because if you have a question about a product, you can check the website of the farm or even call the farmer to ask your question. Yet only one participant actually called a farmer, so only the possibility of asking questions seems to lead to a higher level of trust in the product. These comments show that respondents trust the food they buy:

*(4) In the sixties there were probably more vitamins in for example Brussels sprouts than there are in now. So I prefer to keep everything as pure as possible. But you cannot get pure products everywhere, and you never know what happened to it. I do*

*have the feeling that that is better at 'Goei Eete'. Well, you know what it is. Because you can read the story of the farmer. Who says not to be organic, but I only use pesticides once a year with this and this product. When you buy your food at the supermarket, you just don't know.*

*(13) Because of ordering food at 'Goei Eete', I do feel like I know what I eat. That is very important to me.*

#### 9.1.6 Choice and skills

Because the initiative offers only seasonal products, many products are not available year round. Therefore many participants do the rest of their groceries in the supermarket. Preparing this seasonal products requires some skills. Many people are not used to cook for example beetroots themselves. This could be a barrier to participate at 'Goei Eete'. But some people do not perceive it as a barrier at all. They try to find recipes to make a dish with the products available which enhances creativity.

*(13) But in the end, if you are used to it, you start noticing that you can be very creative with the products available in season. It just makes you very creative.*

One respondent just takes for granted the dishes sometimes do not taste that well:

*(11) Sometimes we eat the most horrible things. The root beets and the carrots. It are not the most culinary meals. But it is funny though, to eat root beets every once in a while.*

#### 9.1.7 Knowledge and education

In spring, the initiative links to many events in the surroundings of the city. For example when the cows go outside for the first time that year, open days at farms and participation-days at farms. This provides people with the ability to visit the farm where they buy their products from. Also, via the newsletter, Facebook and Twitter-page, a lot of information about the products and seasons is provided.

But since the initiative is not fully transparent about all products, the participants have fewer knowledge about the products than that they can potentially know about the products. Therefore they are likely to make ungrounded choices. The question is if people really want to know everything about the product and if this enables them to make better choices. Many people have a lot of questions about food and are unable to oversee everything. The initiative might have a bigger role here.

## 9.2 ENVIRONMENT

There is a data available that model certain types of production systems and its impact on environment. But since this is a social science research, these models are not used. The exact scores on greenhouse gas emissions, land use, water use and the amount of chemicals used are not taken into account, and therefore it is impossible to argue if the farmers and the system of 'Goei Eete' are more sustainable than other farmers or food systems. However, there are some other aspects to be mentioned on environmental impacts of 'Goei Eete'.

#### 9.2.1 Climate change

'Goei Eete' is aiming to offer only consciously ('bewust') produced foods. What conscious means for the organization, is hard to define. They try to offer products which are not, or as little as possible, chemically treated. But experience has shown that only offering untreated products which is locally grown is impossible. Therefore other criteria can provide products with the label 'conscious' as well. For example if the food is unprocessed or if there are no preservatives used. Or if animal feed is locally grown. This makes it hard for people to make a decision about what they want to buy or not.

### 9.2.2 Products

At the point of writing (April 2015), there were 30 types of fruits and vegetables available on the website. At the same time there were about 70 meat, cheese and dairy products available for purchase. Since vegetables have relatively a low impact on the environment and animal products a high impact, the products on the website do not resonate with a sustainable diet. It does not promote a more sustainable diet in a way of reducing meat consumption directly. And if the meat is produced in a more sustainable way, is hard to determine (within this project).

At the other hand, meat bought via the initiative might be seen as a more luxury product. It is produced with more care, is higher in quality and more expensive than meat from the supermarket. Therefore the product holds more values than meat from the conventional food system. Also, being closer to the farm and the ability for people to see the animals they will consume later on, might have an impact on their awareness that meat production is an intensive process. As a result, seeing meat as a more luxury product might be a stepping stone to consume fewer but higher quality and more sustainable animal products.

### 9.2.3 Energy use

Even though the food is transported with an old diesel van, less food miles are being made to get the food from the farm to the city. The food does not have to travel to distribution centers somewhere in the country, and only one van drives around the city instead of a multiple of cars of people who like to buy their food at local farm shops. 'Goei Eete' provides people with the opportunity to buy local, seasonal food so they possibly buy fewer foods which are produced abroad. It is hard to say at what point this increase in buying seasonal products and the reduction of food miles has a lower impact on environment, but at least the opportunity to reduce food miles and therefore greenhouse gas emissions, is available in the city.

One drawback of this approach is that this system will be less sustainable regarding transport at some point. If the entire food supply of the city would be arranged in this way, it would probably not be more sustainable. And in contrast of the promise of the organization to not exceed a kilometer distance of 20KM, some products come from farther away.

### 9.2.4 Animal welfare

The main goal is to offer a broad amount of products. Animal welfare does not seem to be the most important value of the initiative. There is little information about animal welfare available on the website and farmers are not particularly selected because they are known for high animal welfare.

### 9.2.5 Waste reduction

Since the food has travelled only a short distance, the food have a longer shelf life than products from the supermarket. Therefore, possibly less food goes wasted. On the other hand, for many products participants cannot choose the amount or weight of the product themselves. Everybody will get a standardized portion. For single person households it is a challenge to finish all the food. Therefore most of these households, from the respondents, only order once every two or three weeks. Participants order their food before Tuesday and most people pick it up on Friday. It is perceived to be hard to estimate how much food they will need for the next week. This experience illustrates this struggle:

*(14) I am trying to do so. But I find it hard to estimate what I need. And even if I feel like I do know what I need, it is often too much because of eating outside the house. Or it just takes longer than expected to finish all ordered products.*

So participating might result into more food waste than when people buy food in the supermarket. The initiative could also do more in reducing food packaging. Some foods are packaged in plastic bags, others in paper bags. This could be reduced by transporting the foods only in crates, and letting the participants or volunteers pick the foods from these crates.

## 9.3 HEALTH

### 9.3.1 Nutrients and safety

Since the food is fresh, pure and has stronger flavors, some respondents believe the food produced by the local farmers contain more nutrients. But the fact that the food is local and fresh, does not necessarily guarantee a higher amount of nutrients. The foods are not treated and not packaged, which might have a negative impact on nutrient content. At the same time it is questionable if people would only consume foods which are in season, people's diets would be varied enough to consume the suggested amount of micronutrients.

Another aspect which relates to health and safety are the HACCP regulations. The distribution process must comply with all HACCP standards. But this compliance is only required during transport and distribution. When the products leave the central distribution point and the transport van, the quality and safety of the products is the responsibility of the participant. At some locations there is no refrigeration facility available. Therefore icepacks are put in the crates. The food is being delivered in the morning while people can pick it up between 2PM and 6PM. So the food remains uncooled for six to ten hours. People are not aware they are responsible for quality and safety in these hours. If they would know, they might pick it up earlier or pick up their food at another location with refrigeration facilities.

### 9.3.2 Access, affordability and education

Everybody who has access to internet has access to 'Goei Eete' products. So basically everybody has access. Most of the products are cheaper than the products in an organic shop, prices are comparable to the regular supermarket prices. But some products are more expensive, and in any case more expensive than the low budget products in the supermarket. If participants discuss the initiative with friends and family, people often do not understand why food directly from the farmers is not cheaper than the food in the supermarket. It seems to be hard for people to understand that a sustainable diet is important, and that sustainable diets come with a higher price. As one interviewee said:

*(8) F: The 'average' person will not order food at 'Goei Eete'. M: No it is not about upper class or what so ever, it is not only about being able to afford the products. It is more about the fact if you are aware of what you are eating. More people should be aware of what they are eating!*

Besides, it requires some more time and effort to order a part your food on internet and pick it up at one of the pickup points spread all over the city, next to going to other food selling point(s). However, participants at 'Goei Eete' experience the system as easy and accessible and do not feel like it takes a lot of time. So people might perceive it as more time consuming than it actually is, or are just not willing to make a change. It might be a potential educational role for 'Goei Eete' to explain why a different kind of food system is required. Nevertheless, people who do decide to participate do get educated by the initiative by the information mail, Facebook site and Twitter. People are provided with information about the farmers and products, more insight information in the food system and some recipes. More about personal development due to participation of 'Goei Eete' will be discussed in the next chapter.

### 9.3.3 Burden of disease and lifestyle

Participation in the initiative has some effect on people's lifestyle. People become more creative in cooking and try different products. People's skills are increased and people pay more attention to what they buy. This might result in a diet that has fewer negative effects on bodily health. Whether or not participants are healthier due to participation at the initiative remains unclear.

## 9.4 ECONOMY

### 9.4.1 Efficiency

People have to order their food in advance, farmers receive and prepare the order, 'Goei Eete' picks it up with only one van, distributes the foods in the city and people can pick it up. This is a rather complex system to only serve 70 people. And if something goes wrong, for example computer problems or if somebody is ill, the system is prone to failure. While people expect the food to be available and to meet certain quality standards. Therefore participants' expectations cannot always be met. Though, the system of the initiative bypasses a distribution system on a large scale. Food does not have to travel to big centralized distribution points, where it is checked for quality that goes further than the wishes of the consumer whereby a lot of food goes wasted, and a lot of packaging and energy to keep the food fresh is required. So the question is if the system of 'Goei Eete' is more efficient than the conventional food system remains unanswered.

### 9.4.2 Fair returns versus true competition

When people order food at 'Goei Eete', 70 percent of the price people pay goes directly to the farmers. 30 percent of the price goes to the distribution system of 'Goei Eete'. This system works on a voluntary basis, so nobody will get rich from distributing food. This results into a higher turnover for the farmer than when he would sell the food to the conventional distribution system. This might provide the farmer with more financial space for innovation. Most participants do realize they are supporting local farmers:

*(4) If you buy your food at the supermarket, they just squeeze the suppliers. That is just wrong. I am not that consistent that I do not do any groceries there. Because that is very hard from a practical perspective.*

*(12) I prefer to give a bigger share to the farmers than paying all companies in the supply chain.*

At the other hand, there is no true competition in the current system of the initiative. Not all farmers can participate because not all farming systems resonate with the values of 'Goei Eete'. Logistically, participation of more farmers is a challenge in the current distribution system of the initiative. More farmers means more driving around with the van and a more complicated distribution at the central distribution point. At this point there are no means available to expand the system.

### 9.4.3 Food security and resilience

When buying food at local farms, the local economy might be supported. Local farmers earn more for their produce which strengthens their position and enhances working conditions. At the same time, local people are more involved in the food system. They have the option to see what happens at farms which might reduce the distance between farmer and urban dweller.

At the same time people need to be creative with their cooking skills. There is only a certain variety of products available which forces people to buy, prepare and consume other foods than they would

usually do. This is for many people a new experience. It can contribute to people's skills and knowledge about food, which can be shared with future generations.

## 9.5 GOVERNANCE

One aspect of good governance is democratic accountability. The initiative as it is now is not democratic. Not everybody's opinion can be heard and taken into account. Therefore some ethical values of some people are not resonated in the initiative. Also, the system is not entirely transparent. There is no information about some farmers, and there is often no full transparency about the production methods used.

## 9.6 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Since the concept of sustainable diets is diverse, it is hard to assess all components. It touches upon many different fields, like nutrition, technology and climate studies, which requires more knowledge to be able to conclude on these aspects.

What can be concluded from the data is that people enjoy the food from the initiative more than food from the supermarket. It tastes and smells better. They also enjoy the other aspects related to the system of '*Goei Eete*'. Like the idea that farmers get more money for their product, they feel like they put a lower pressure on environment, and enjoy to know where their food comes from. As concluded earlier, the idea that the food comes from nearby lead to a high amount of trust in the food and in the farmer. Also, people perceive the food from the initiative as healthier, which cannot be taken for granted.

The initiative wants to be open for everybody. They offer a wide range of products. Regarding equality and access, the system is not fully democratic but is more transparent than the conventional food system. However, the food is more expensive than the budget foods in the supermarket. The initiative pleads for paying more money for food, because low prices of food come at a cost. But for some people in the city who are on a tight budget, paying more for food is not an option. Therefore equality and access are not guaranteed for all citizens. However, it does increase creativity, knowledge and skills regarding food and the food system for many respondents.

In what way the initiative contributes to a lower impact on environment remains unclear. They do offer consciously produced food, but what the standards for this foods are is imprecise. At the same time, the initiative offers a lot of meat, dairy and cheese products in relation to the amount of fruits and vegetables. Animal products have a higher burden on environment than plant products, and via the initiative people will not become aware of this. Therefore they are not likely to reduce animal based consumption due to the knowledge the initiative offers. The food travels fewer kilometres from farm to consumer. But since the initiative is on a small scale, it might result into relatively higher fossil fuel use for transport than foods from the conventional food system.

## 10 ADDRESSING A TRANSITION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DIETS

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When a consumer decides to preferentially purchase local food, they may explicitly be making a decision to benefit local farmers, the local economy and the local political status quo. However, simultaneously they are implicitly deciding not to support farmers, regions and political systems beyond their locality. The cumulative impact of these decisions may have implications for the wealth of producers and the development of regions, which may in turn have wider environmental and political impacts (Edwards-Jones et al. 2008). In this chapter the findings of the research will be put in the light of transition theory and in the bigger perspective of society. It has been shown that the current food system is not sustainable and therefore has to change. What this change actually looks like is not taken into account here. The findings in this chapter are based on assumptions.

### 10.1 NOVEL PRACTICES

'*Goei Eete*' is a local food system that can be seen as an alternative to the conventional food system. Its opposite values regarding profit and being a shorter food supply chain, provide an opposite system. People are able to buy food directly from the farmer so the conventional food supply chain is bypassed and the farmer earns a higher percentage per sold product. The system is entirely based on volunteers, and therefore there is no need to make profit. The relation between farmer and consumer becomes closer, in physical and emotional terms. In the next sections, the impact of these novel practices is discussed.

### 10.2 SOCIOTECHNICAL REGIMES

#### 10.2.1 Novelty to regime

At this point the initiative reaches people who already have an interest in food. When these people try to convince others to participate, they often get negative reactions. Also, the food at the initiative is more expensive than foods in the supermarket. Therefore the initiative is not able to reach everybody at this point. But nor is this the point. If the initiative tries to take over the food supply of the city, the country and the world, it would get a new complicated distribution system. To sustain this system on a voluntary basis seems impossible, and therefore technological anchoring is not as applicable here. But the initiative might have other impacts on regimes and landscapes than taking over the food system. Most of these impacts can be seen as institutional anchoring.

#### 10.2.2 Making profit to making values

The current food system, but also the current economic system, are based on growth via making profit. If the niche of local food initiatives can prove that other systems are working too, this might have an effect on insights and dominant discourses of the current regime. Discourses might change so that problems related to this regime are more acknowledged. The idea of development via making more profit might lose some terrain, which might create space for a new regime.

#### 10.2.3 Legislation

Showing that other food supply systems work too, might open the eyes of legislators. It is likely that legislators are aware of the problems related to the current food system regime, but might feel like another system has no support of civilians. Showing that civil society initiatives do have an impact might result open up a discussion about the current system. However, changing legislation has to deal with more aspects than civilians, so making a change in legislation will not be easy.

#### 10.2.4 Farmers

Most of the farmers are farmers who sell their products to the dominant food system. They keep the amount of products ordered via '*Goei Eete*' aside, so these products are sold via the system of the initiative. Some farmers do not sell to the dominant food system. For example because they have chosen for another business model to have more contact with their clients or because they are too small.

The initiative has little contact with the farmers. They cannot tell if farmers benefit from participation, besides that they get more money for the products they sell via '*Goei Eete*'. This leads to the questions who supports who? Are the farmers supporting the initiative by selling their products to the initiative, or is the initiative supporting the farmer by providing them a bigger share of what the consumer is paying? However, even though this report did not focus on farmers, farmers and consumers do not communicate a lot. At this point, the supermarket determines the price for the products, which is often too low to cover expenses. '*Goei Eete*' has the ability to strengthen the relation between farmers and consumers, and can pass on wishes and ideas of consumers to farmers. If people show an interest in farming and products and show they are willing to pay a higher price, farmers might get the feeling they are supported by the people in the city. For the farmers who do not have a sustainable production system, this might make them feel more confident to make a change.

### 10.3 SOCIOTECHNICAL LANDSCAPES

#### 10.3.1 Knowledge, values and practices

Participants in the initiative started to realize more how the current food system is designed and what implications it has on environment and economy. But in this research, the respondents have a relatively high socioeconomic status only. They have the means to buy food with higher quality and the cognitive ability to think about bigger societal structures. It remains unclear if people of lower socioeconomic statuses are likely to get involved in another kind of food system. But when many people with a higher socioeconomic status get involved, the obtained skills and knowledge might trickle down to the lower socioeconomic status groups.

#### 10.3.2 Food standards

Foods from the supermarket often look all the same. They have commercial standards to comply with before they end up in the supermarket, for example cleanliness, lack of damage, color, size and shape (Edwards-Jones et al. 2008). The food the initiative offers often do not comply with these standards. Nobody complained about this. Most people indicated that they even liked that the produce had still sand on it and all look differently. It brings them closer to nature. Realizing that food does not necessarily have to comply with all standards to be good might have an impact on these standards. People might start taking diversity for granted and are happy with it.

#### 10.3.3 Dimensions of good food

When asking people what is good food, people will likely provide an answer which incorporates bodily health and taste. Because people make food choices based on time, tradition, culture and their perceptions of good food (Neff et al. 2009), I assume that many people do not take into account economy and environment in their food choices. The initiative brings in these factors. It makes people think about what good food is, and that good food incorporates more than bodily health only. It provides them with a certain kind of discourse which makes it easier for them to acknowledge the problems related to the food system. It also provides the ability to talk about their participation at the initiative and their reasons for participation with others. This might trigger other people to think about these more unknown dimensions too.



#### 10.3.4 Trust in the conventional food system

Changing food standards and adding dimensions of good food might lead to distrust in the supermarket system. A couple of respondents report that good food should be low in preservatives and additives. This might be related to the appreciation of the pure foods from the initiative. They experience that pure food tastes better than the food with additives. People start to realize that additives like sugar, salt and E-numbers are not required for a product to taste and be good. They also start checking the ingredients of a product which makes them realize that in many foods that are claimed to be healthy, actually hold a lot of sugar or salt. The provided examples as low-fat fruit yoghurt, which has a lot of sugar in it. Or ketchup, which is regarded as a normal, not necessarily healthy or unhealthy product, which holds a lot of sugar too. Some respondents feel they are being fooled by the food system and start paying more attention to what they buy.

The initiative is providing a food system for participants that they trust better than the conventional food system. The fact that respondents are able to ask questions about the product and has more insight in production methods comforts the respondents. In this way, via participating, people might be able to regain trust in foods and food production systems.

#### 10.3.5 Vote with the fork

At this point, the initiative is rather small. It only has 70 weekly consumers. But the reach of the initiative is bigger. Many people are subscribed to the newsletter, it has over a thousand likes on Facebook, and over 200 on Twitter. Together with participants who are spreading the word, it might have an effect on user practices. People start buying other foods where for example environment or animal welfare are taken more into account. When many people change their buying behavior, it can show to the main players of the current regime that people want to do it differently, which provides these players incentives to make a change.

#### 10.3.6 Local trap

Respondents have a high amount of trust in the initiative, the food and the farmers. They assume that what they perceive as good food, is resonated within the practices of the initiative. Also, because the food is fresh, has traveled less and tastes and smells good, they quickly make the assumption that the food is healthier. Besides, because the food comes from nearby, people expect the food to be more climate friendly than food that travels far. In general, many assumptions are made about the food supply system of '*Goei Eete*', without these assumptions are actually tested and proven. This indicates features of the local trap (Morgan 2010). And when people assume the food has certain attributes, people stop thinking about the food they consume which might inhibit a transition towards more sustainable diets.

### 10.4 NETWORK ANCHORING

Networking anchoring is applicable in the case of '*Goei Eete*'. Networking anchoring indicates changes in the network of actors that carry the novelty. The initiative gives participants the feeling that they are stronger connected to the farmer. They know where the food comes from, what they do not know when they buy the food in the supermarket. The farmer does not directly become more connected to the consumer yet, but the initiative has the potential to do so. It also connects with groups besides the participant and the farmer. The initiative is constantly seeking for connections and coalitions, for example with other local food initiatives to learn from, local organizations, new volunteers, local food restaurants and Tilburg University. With these practices it increases the reach of the message. So far it has not led to more participants, but when people do see leaflets or information about the initiative, they are potentially triggered to think about the initiative. When people know what the leaflets are

about, they will be triggered to think about it again. Or maybe even start to participate, as some of the respondents did when they saw the leaflet.

## 10.5 OUTSIDE THE FOOD SYSTEM

As mentioned earlier, food is generally regarded as too cheap. The low prices of food come at a cost, for example via a high impact on climate and biodiversity, and low animal welfare. Food production systems which do take into account these costs are obviously more expensive. But at this time, a large group in the Netherlands is not able to afford more expensive food. Therefore not only the food system has to make a change, also the bigger economy must change. To make sustainable resources available for everybody, wealth must be distributed more equally.

Some participants link transitions in the food system to other transitions in society. Like the emergence of knitting clubs, the gaining popularity of playing board games and the developing areas in Tilburg which 'steal' popularity from the main shopping street. This might indicate that the society wants to change development via growth to development in quality.

## 11 CONCLUSION

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### 11.1 SUPPORTING HEALTHY SUSTAINABLE DIETS

As explored above, the initiative itself might not lead to more sustainable diets as such, but participating does support people's personal processes towards sustainable diets. It makes people more aware of their environment, ways of producing food and the long supply chain of the current regime. Sometimes they try to use this knowledge when buying food. But people are not used to making food choices on a cognitive way. As the data illustrate, they tend to make their choices based on habit, emotion and impulses because they have no other cognitive resources available. '*Goei Eete*' can be, or is, this cognitive resource by making it easy to make better, sustainable food choices. At this point, people trust the organization as good and sustainable. Even though sometimes people's expectations do not resonate with the practices of the initiative, they enjoy the food of the initiative much more than the food from the supermarket. It is of added value on peoples' life quality.

### 11.2 PARTICIPANTS' INCENTIVES AND PRACTICES

The initiative provides people with an existing interest in buying food in a different way the opportunity to do so. If the initiative was not there, respondents would have faced a wall or needed to look for another alternative available in the city. Or they had to cycle or drive to all farms to pick up their local food, or more likely, they would buy their food at the conventional food system.

All respondents in this research had a certain interest in food before participating. Participating is a more or less logic result of their thoughts and lifestyles. Some participants had a particular interest in health or had food allergies, some had an interest in environment and some in supporting local farmers and the local economy. Often a combination of multiple aspects was found. Participants report practical, idealistic and personal benefits of participation. Respondents talk about the initiative with others a lot. But it does not seem to activate people who do not have an interest in local/food. There are probably too many practical barriers for them, as indicated by the respondents. People likely need practical and idealistic reasons to participate at the initiative. At this point, the initiative is mainly focusing on taking away practical barriers. Therefore the group of people who already have an interest in food will be triggered to participate. The other group is currently not being addressed.

Overall in the report, trust seems to be a key aspect. Most respondents indicate they do not trust the conventional food system and do not appreciate the practices within it. Because the food from '*Goei Eete*' comes from farmers nearby, the physical distance is decreased. But also the emotional distance is smaller. The idea that people can ask questions about the product or production methods is comforting. The notion to know where exactly the food is grown and the ability to visit the farm is very much appreciated. The participants do like to make different food choices, but the anonymous product in the supermarket makes making better choices difficult. Therefore the initiative can be seen as a new network of trust for participants. They trust the initiative to make the better food choice.

### 11.3 ORGANIZATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND BARRIERS

As a small scale enterprise on a voluntary basis, the initiative has managed to overcome many practical barriers to set up an civic food network. It has accomplished a steady amount of 70 weekly orders. The system is working well. But the board members and volunteers experience that it is hard to run such an initiative on a voluntary basis, and that if something goes wrong, the system might fail. Therefore, they are aiming to grow from 70 to 200 weekly orders. This allows the initiative to hire somebody who can guarantee consistency of the system. But there are some barriers which make it complicated to

grow. In the first place, the way to go needs to be determined. Board members and volunteers come from different background and hold different values. Shared is the belief to be an alternative of the current food system. But the practices related to being an alternative are a point of discussion. For example what products need to be sold via the initiative and what communication messages must be send. Secondly, as non-commercial organization, there is not a lot of money available to send those communication messages. And lastly, the logistical system as it is now, does not allow for much growth.

Besides barriers, there are a opportunities too. The initiative is based on values and ideals, and not on making profit. This distinguishes the initiative from the conventional food system. People might feel attracted to another system, once they start realizing what problems are related to the current food system. Also, people are free to choose if and what they want to order every week. There is no subscription needed to participate in the initiative. Therefore the initiative is found to be more open than other local food initiatives. Lastly, the active volunteers are a big strength of the initiative. It might be hard to get on the same line, but there is a lot of energy within the group to make the system work and hopefully contribute to a change in the conventional food system.

#### 11.4 TRANSITION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DIETS

The organization '*Goei Eete*' started from tension and pressure (de Haan and Rotmans 2011), they disagree with the current regime regarding the treatment of farmers, unfair prices and creating awareness about food. Currently it is maturing into its niche. It is looking at possibilities to grow by reaching more people and to improve logistics. Together with other initiatives in the city, it might open up space to develop new initiatives supporting sustainable diets. For example if people start seeing the problems, a value shift might occur. However, the practices of the initiative are opposing the practices of the conventional food system. Therefore there is a mismatch with the current sociotechnical landscape, and it is hard to find support.

Though a way of transition could for example be via producers, currently producers who produce sustainable products have a slightly better market position than 'regular' products (Eriksson 2004). But this better position does not weigh up against the extra costs. If people start seeing the negative externalities of the products they buy, they might start demanding more sustainable products. This relates to the sociotechnical landscape of the current food system. This allows shops in the city to buy in sustainable products which makes sustainable food corresponding with people's new values more accessible, which relates to a change in sociotechnical regimes.

The novelty '*Goei Eete*' has different values than the goals current food system. '*Goei Eete*' might be one of these novelties that leads shifting values and beliefs. For example by sharing knowledge which creates more awareness in the city about the current food system. When knowledge is increased and awareness is raised, this might have an impact on the discourse around food. When discourse is changed, certain problems might be acknowledged more, which provides incentives to work on making a change. It may be suggested that the initiative starts some discussion about food and buying food in a different way. Whether or not this discussion is positive or negative, is maybe not even relevant. Maybe, together with blogs, media, other initiatives and the impact of friends and family, people are ready to make a change and a tipping-point for a bigger change will be reached.

The novelty is a assembly of people who all have some kind of interest in making a change or changing their own practices. Their engagements often go further than food provisioning alone. Being engaged together, might provide hope. Together, people might create a more supportive environment for others to make a change too. The gap between city and nature might be decreased. Also, the

relationship between food and nature might be rediscovered. All this together might provide the ability to have an impact on the sociotechnical landscape and regime.

When this new food regime will be established will remain unclear until it is there. And once it is there, it will be impossible to determine what role the initiative exactly played within this change. For sure, the initiative and the food the initiative provides for the respondents, plays an important role. It educates them, enhances their skills and not unimportant, they enjoy the food a lot. Altogether, this might have an impact on sociotechnical landscapes. And via the sociotechnical landscape, the sociotechnical regime might be changed as well.

## 12 DISCUSSION

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This study has illustrated a minor part of a transition towards sustainable diets. The methods used gave an insight in the organizational aspects of the initiative and in people's experiences when participating in the initiative. It is hard to identify if what people told was based on sentiment or facts. People probably do not even know themselves. The food system is very complex, and talking about it is complex too.

In the news mail of '*Goei Eete*', I wrote a short introduction about myself, together with a call for respondents. I wrote that I am interested in food choice. It is likely that people who are already familiar with finding their own way in the food system are willing and able to talk about this topic. This had led to a small, selective group of participants in the initiative. Therefore, this study has been unable to demonstrate that people with no interest in food, health, local economy and environment, or a lower socioeconomic status are triggered to participate. However, it cannot be concluded that this is actually true. People who do not have an interest, or have a lower socioeconomic status were not presented in this study. Maybe because they did not feel like participating because they feel like they have nothing to say about their food choices. Another set of methods should be used to reach this group, if this group exists within the initiative.

Also, the bigger picture of aspects of sustainable diets have not been researched. Like farming systems, the environmental impact of the initiative compared the conventional food system and people's health statuses before and during participating. The impact on the sociotechnical regime and sociotechnical landscape cannot be fully explored and determined with fifteen interviews only. To understand the transition better, more aspects must be researched.

For example why friends and family of participants often react negatively on requests to start participating while the respondents themselves find participation really easy. It would be interesting to find out why people do not want to participate, so these barriers for making a change can be taken away. It would be also interesting to know which behavior has the strongest impact on supporting a transition. For example which farmer to support. Is it better to support farms who already have a sustainable way of producing food? Or should you better support farms who do not have such a sustainable production system yet, so they can invest in a more sustainable production?

However, with the support civil society and local initiatives can be shown that food is a pressing issue (Halliday, 2013). When mobilizing enough political support, principles like social justice and social inequality could be ensured through new trade and development rules (Morgan 2010). But socio-technical developments require societal change in different sectors (Moors et al. 2004). For example in transport, energy, industrial production and agriculture. It is questionable if the initiative alone has a sufficient impact on the socio-technical regime and socio-technical landscape. The necessity to break through current trends in discourses and practices will take a long time.

More research is also needed on knowledge discovery in fields such as risk perception, consumer behavior and social attitudes. In addition, social scientists will have an important role in understanding how decision-makers, be they consumers, the media, food chain professionals or politicians, can best use the emerging knowledge to guide their actions (Edwards-Jones et al. 2008) to get a better understanding on how people behave in local food networks.

Assessing the initiative on the aspects of sustainable diets was hard and complicated. For a big part, this thesis is based on what I have seen in the initiative. This research has proposed an inquiry based on sociotechnical framework. The social aspect has been emphasized. More interdisciplinary research

is needed to make a full assessment of civic food initiatives on its contribution on sustainable diets, and the possibilities they have to support a transition towards sustainable diets.

Another remaining question is if as long as there are other cheaper and easier options to buy food available, people will make a change their social practices. As described earlier, people have too little cognitive resources available to oversee and assess the entire system and make a good choice. Therefore I believe that not only civil society has to make a change. Technology should support the sustainability of the food system, and policy makers should make it easier for people to buy sustainable food by increasing the availability. All groups should do a bit to make the food system and the world more healthy and sustainable.

## 13 REFLECTION

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### 13.1 SOME HISTORY

Since I was in high school, I have been interested in people's food choices. I had hard times understanding why and how people were able to consume so much unhealthy food so that they became overweight. Consuming too much and certain types of food, clearly had an effect on health. This observation has been leading in my choices for my study.

In my master I started taking classes at Rural Sociology, did an ACT-project related to food and cities and went to Copenhagen with Stichting RUW to explore sustainable initiatives in that city. It was in this period that I found out that food did not only have to do with personal choices and also not only with health. Local economy, politics, the food industry and the environment turned out to be important in the field of food. When I started thinking about a topic for my master thesis, I started from the perspective of food in urban areas. Food deserts and food security had my interest. A first conversation at Rural Sociology led me to Jessica, who introduced me to the concept 'sustainable diets'. The perspective of sustainability of food was new to me, but I decided to go for it.

### 13.2 EXPLORING THE TOPIC

In the first weeks I have been busy reading and watching TEDtalks to create an image of the food system and all its important players and fields. An interesting phase, where a new world of literature opened up for me. It was a challenge for me to come up with research questions, since the topic was so new for me and there were so many interesting topics. But I always wanted to take into account the perspective of health and people's personal choice since that has been the starting point for my study career.

I do not recall when the local food initiatives came in. But this turned out to be a perfect subject to combine several food related topics. It also provided me with the opportunity to do something in my city of birth, Tilburg. When I went home to visit my parents I always saw changes in the city which I really enjoyed, like the emergence of new areas and the rise of urban gardening projects. Now I got the chance to research some of these changes.

The first contact with '*Goei Eete*' was exciting. I did not really know what my research was about and now I had to convince the starter of the initiative why they should allow me to do research at their initiative. Luckily they were very enthusiastic about me and my research, and let me in without taking too much effort.

### 13.3 THE FIELDWORK

The first interview was a bit stressful. Fortunately, Lucie offered to do the first interview and provide me with some feedback at the same time. This made the first interview more comfortable. Lucie talked a lot and without taking a lot of effort, I collected the information I wanted. The second interview was just as easy. The respondent talked and talked which made it easy for me. But the third interview was more difficult. The respondent was very critical about my research and wanted to know everything beforehand. Her criticism made me nervous and during the interview I felt like I did not know what I was doing. Later on the data collection phase I found out that I could not expect everybody to react the same on my questions, and that I was the one who had to be creative to get the information I wanted. It taught me to be flexible with my questions and to adapt whenever necessary to comfort



respondents or to find out about the interests and motivations of the respondent to create a conversation with rich data.

Also the observations were in the beginning a bit uncomfortable. I did not know how to position myself, to be not too much a researcher asking only questions. But while collecting data I found out that most people do like to tell their own story and like it if you are interested in them. And if they don't, you will notice that too. This made me realize that when looking and listening at people, shows a lot about what you can do and say. Probably, the next times (if there will be) of doing fieldwork I will be uncomfortable in the beginning too. But I will definitely start on it with more confidence.

## 13.4 DATA ANALYSIS

When I got back in Wageningen with all my data, I struggled with how structure all interviews and observations. I knew organizing things is my strength, but I never did that with so many words at the same time. Going over and over the data has led to codes and sub codes, and very surprisingly (or actually not) these could easily be translated to the structure of my report.

The writing phase started well. I wrote a couple of pages a day and if I would be able to keep up with this pace, the thesis would be finished real soon. But after two weeks I struggled with keeping motivated. I reflected on the last two weeks and found out that I had been working really hard, maybe too hard, and that it made a lot of sense why I was tired at that point. The next weeks I have been working on a bit lower pace to finish my thesis. I had to accept that the best way to work on my thesis was not always behind my computer. Sometimes during a run, in bed or watching TV, I got the best ideas. Making my head a bit emptier made me more productive. Weird maybe, but it worked for me.

Critical feedback of Jessica helped me a lot to think more deeply about the theories and findings. It made me realize that a theoretical framework is never really finished. For example, in the first weeks I found a lot of literature on alternative food networks. While discussing this, we decided to not use the literature on AFNs. In the last round of feedback, it was suggested to do use the literature on AFNs. When I handed in the draft, I knew the exploration of the terminology was not yet correct. When looking back, I do not understand why I did not get back to the literature on AFNs myself. It has always been there in Mendeley, but I did not think of reading it again. It learned me to get back to the literature when I have doubts.

## 13.5 CONCLUSION

After all, from a personal perspective, the thesis has been an interesting learning experience. When I just started, I did not know what to do and never thought that I would be capable of writing a report of 90 pages about my own research (questions) of interest. Step by step I felt like I got there, with a lot of help and support of Jessica. I think believing in myself and in what I have learned during my study period, has been the biggest challenge. Writing this thesis has made me more confident about my own capabilities to do something challenging on my own.

Working on this thesis has also been an interesting exploration of where my interests are. I started at communications in my bachelor, to health sciences in my master, where I thought my interest was more in social psychology. Starting the thesis at RSO was a bit out of the box, but gave me the opportunity to find out that sociology challenges me more than social psychology. This has been a super useful insight for me.

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## APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW GUIDE DUTCH

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### **Info**

Naam:

Leeftijd:

Beroep:

Gezinssamenstelling:

Opname:

Voornaam gebruiken:

### **Algemeen**

Sinds wanneer bestel je? Hoe bekend geraakt?

Hoe vaak?

Wat?

Meestal hetzelfde?

Bestel je nu hetzelfde als op het begin?

### **Waarom**

Waarom bestel je?

Wat vind je belangrijk?

Wat is je doel?

Supermarkt?

Duurder, niet erg?

Gezin?

### **Impact**

Voordelen Goei Eete?

Invloed op je leven?

Gedragsverandering?

### **Verspreiding**

Praat je wel eens over Goei Eete met anderen?

Doen die ook mee of niet?

Wat vertel je?

Reactie?

Overhalen?

### **Buiten Goei Eete**

Buiten Goei Eete bezig met voeding/milieu?

Voor of na Goei Eete?

### **Duurzaamheid**

Altijd blijven bestellen?

### **Imago**

Omschrijf het imago

Bijdrage aan Tilburg en omgeving?

Bijdrage eigen leven?

### **Organisatie**

Rol?

Vanuit welk perspectief is volgens jou de organisatie opgestart? / Idee Goei Eete  
Doelen? Haalbaar?  
Wat nodig om doelen te halen?  
Bestuurssamenstelling. Divers. Lastig of juist goed?

### **Boeren**

Waarom doen ze mee?  
Hebben ze er wat aan?  
Hoe kunnen zij bijdragen?

### **Abstract**

Wat is voor jou goed eten?

Denk je dat je met je koopgedrag/vrijwilligerswerk bij Goei Eete verandering kan brengen in het voedselsysteem?

Goei Eete's idee is een voedselcollectief. Samen voedsel inkopen en op die manier de boer steunen. Krijg je dit idee ook?

Denk je dat het belichten van de bewustwording rondom voedsel een toegevoegde waarde is voor Goei Eete?

## APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE ENGLISH

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### Topics Interview Goei Eete

#### Info

Name:

Age:

Profession:

Household composition:

Recording:

Which name to use in report:

#### General

Since when do you order at Goei Eete? How did you get involved?

How often?

What?

General trend in ordering?

#### Why

Why do you order?

Why do you think ordering food at GE is important?

Wat is your goal?

Where do you do your other shopping?

Food at Goei Eete is a bit more expensive. Opinion?

Opinion of family/household member?

#### Impact

What are the pros of Goei Eete?

Does it affect your lifestyle?

Does it affect your behaviour?

#### Spreading the word

Do you ever talk about Goei Eete with others?

Are those people involved or not?

What do you tell?

What is their reaction?

Did you ever persuade somebody to get involved?

#### Beyond Goei Eete

How do you value food and environment?

Before or after participating at Goei Eete?

#### Sustainability

Do you think you will keep ordering at Goei Eete?

#### Image

Can you describe the image of Goei Eete?

Does it contribute to Tilburg and surroundings?

Does it contribute to your own life?

#### Organization

Do you have a role in the organization?  
From which perspective do you think the organization started?  
What are the goals of the organization?  
Do you believe these are feasible?  
What is required to achieve goals?  
The composition of the board is diverse. Good or bad?

### **Farmers**

Why do the farmers participate?  
Do you think participation is profitable?  
How can they contribute to Goei Eete?

### **Abstract**

What is 'good food' for you?

Do you believe that due to participating in the initiative, you can affect the current food system?

Goei Eete is a food collective. Is this clear for you?

Do you believe that adding awareness about food is an added value for Goei Eete?

## APPENDIX III: SCHEDULE DATA ANALYSIS PHASE

Date	Time	Activity
10/12/2014	19:00	First meeting with Goei Eete
24/12/2014	11:00	Second meeting with Goei Eete: Key informant Lucie
07/01/2015		Write paragraph for newsletter Goei Eete with call for volunteers
08/01/2015	13:00	Participant observation: Walhoeve food distribution
09/01/2015		First responses on call for volunteers
09/01/2015	14:00	Participant observation: Pick up own order at Gebouw 88
10/01/2015	16:00	Participant observation: New Year's drink at De Bouwplaats
13/01/2015	12:30	Meeting Jessica to discuss proposal
13/01/2015	19:00	Participant observation: attend board meeting
14/01/2015	14:00	Interview: Lucie
15/01/2015	08:30	Participant observation: pick up food farmers
16/02/2015	14:00	Participant observation: volunteer at pick up point
19/01/2015	11:00	Interview: Hannah
20/01/2015	12:00	Interview: Helena
22/01/2015	09:30	Interview: Aafke en Robbert
26/01/2015	10:00	Interview: Aaron
27/01/2015	11:00	Interview: Caryn
28/01/2015	10:00	Interview: Mieke
29/01/2015	18:00	Participant observation: brainstorm session
30/01/2015	14:00	Interview: Huub
31/01/2015	12:00	Participant observation: food coop exchange day
02/02/2015	11:00	Interview: Miriam
03/02/2015	16:00	Interview: Yvonne
03/02/2015	19:30	Participant observation: board meeting
04/02/2015	11:00	Interview: Elizabeth
06/02/2015	09:30	Interview: Jolanda
06/02/2015	14:00	Participant observation: volunteer at pick up point
16/02/2015	All day	Prepare presentation proposal
17/02/2015	14:00	Presentation proposal
23/02/2015	12:00	Interview: Linde
25/02/2015	09:30	Interview: Karlijn
27/02/2015	14:00	Participant observation: volunteer at pick up point
27/02/2015	17:00	Interview: Key informant
28/02/2015	13:00	Meeting organizational structure (share opinions, off the record)
01/03/2015	15:00	Participant Observation: Promotion Goei Eete @ Swan Market